Apples of Gold

FOR

Young Men and VVomen,

AND

A Crown of Glory for Old Men and women.

OR,

The happiness of being good betimes,
And the honor of being an Old Disciple.
Clearly and fully discovered, and closely, and faithfully applyed.

ALSO

The Young Mans Objections answered,
And the Old Mans doubts resolved.

By *THOMAS BROOKS* Preacher of the Gospel at *Margarets new Fishstreet-hill.*

But I thy Servant fear the Lord from my Youth. 1 King. 18. 12.
The hoary head is a crown of Glory, if it be found in a way of righteousness, Prov. 16. 31.

LONDON,
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To all Young Persons throughout the Nations, especially those (of both Sexes) who begin to turn their faces towards *Zion*.

Dear Hearts,

A Word spoken in due season how good is it? it is often like apples of Gold in pictures of silver, many times such a word is sweet, precious, pleasing, delectable, and strong in its operation. A company of near friends dining together one Sabbath day, one that was at Table (to prevent impertinent discourse) said, That it was a question whether they should all go to Heaven or no; which struck them all into a dump, and caused every one to enter into a serious consideration with themselves, one thought if

Prov. 15. 23. 25 c. 11 A word spoken (*gnalophnau*) upon his wheels, that is with a due concurrence and observation of all circumstances of time, place, person, all which are as the wheels upon which our words and speeches should run, such a word is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.

if any of this company go to hell it must bee I, and so thought another, and another, and indeed so thought almost every one then present, as well servants that waited, as those that sate at Table, as it was afterwards acknowledged; and (thorow the mercy and blessing of God) this speech so wrought upon the spirits of most of them, that it proved the first instrument all means of their conversion.

I have my hopes, through grace, that this Treatise, though it be sown in weakness, yet by the blessing of the most high upon it, it may rise in power, and bee an instrumental meaus of the winning of souls to Christ, which is my highest ambition in this world, and therefore I have broke thorow all difficulties, and carnal reasonings, that might otherwise have stifled this babe in the womb, and kept it from ever seeing of the light.

I have read of an Emperour that delighted in no undertaking, so much as those which in the esteem

of his Counsellors, and Captains were deemed most difficult and impossible, if they said such or such an enterprize would never be accomplished, it was argument enough to him, to make the adventure, and he usually prospered, he seldom miscarried

I have never found greater and choycer blessings, to attend any of my poor weak Labours, than those that have been brought forth into the world thorow the greatest straits and difficulties.

Valerius Maximus reports that one telling a souldier, going to war against the Persians, that they would hide the Sun with their arrows, hee answered, we shall fight best in the shade; nothing should discourage nor dis-hearten a souldier of Christ, 2 Tim. 2. 3, 4. Christ saith to all his souldiers (as the black Prince his father said to him, fighting as it were in bloud to the knees, and in great distress) either vanquish or dye. Men of no resolution, or of weak resolution, will bee but little serviceable to the

Valerius Maximus. lib. 3. c. de fiducia.

Hist. of France. p. 196.

good of soules. Such watch-men as will bee free from the blood of soules, and be serviceable to the interest of Christ, in turning sinners from darknesse to light, must bee men of spirit and resolution.

Auguſt. de tempore ſerm. 246

I remember Austin beginneth one of his Sermons thus (Ad vos mihi Sermo, O juvenes, flos ætatis, periculum mentis) To you is my speech, O young men, the flower of age, the danger of the mind.

So say I, to you O Young men, do I dedicate the ensuing Treatise, and that first because, the matter contained therein, doth primarily and eminently concern you.

And Secondly, Because of an earnest desire, that I have of your internal and eternal welfare.

And Thirdly, Because of some late impulses that have been upon my spirit, to leave this Treatise in your hands as a Legacy of my Love, and as a testimony and witness of my (great) ambition to help forward your everlasting salvation.

And Fourthly, Because there is most hope of doing good amongst you (as I evidence more at large in the following Treatise.)

And fifthly, To countermine the great underminer of your souls, whose great design is to poyson you, and possess you in the morning of your dayes.

Sixthly, To provoke others that are more able and worthy, to bee more serviceable to you in declaring themselves fully on this very subject, which none yet have done that I know of, though it be a point of as great concernment to young persons (especially) as any I know in all the scriptures.

Seventhly, and Lastly, because there are very many that do lye in wait, to deceive, corrupt, and Poyson young persons with God-dishonoring, Christ denying, conscience wasting, and soul damning opinions, Principles, and Blasphemies.

Eph. 4 14

A blind eye is worse then a lame foot, he that had the leprosy in his head was to be pronounced utterly unclean

I have read of one who boasted, and gloried in this, that he had spent thirty years in corrupting and poy-

Poyſoning of youth; doubtleſſe many wretches, many monſters there be among us, who make it their buſineſſe, their glory, their all, to delude and draw young Perſons to thoſe dangerous errours and Blaſphemies, that leads to deſtruction. Error and folly (ſaith one very well) be the knots of Satan, wherewith hee tyes children to the ſtake to be burnt in hell.

There is a truth in what the Tragædian *ſaid long ſince* (Venenum in auro bibitur) *Poyſon is commonly drunk out of a cup of gold; So is an error, or by-notion ſooneſt taken into the judgement and conſcience from perſons of the faireſt carriage, & ſmootheſt converſations. Error is ſo foul an Hagge, that if it ſhould come in its own ſhape; a man would loath it, and fly from it, as from hell.*

If Jezabel *had not painted her face, ſhee had not gotten ſo many young doteing Adulterers to have followed her to their own ruine.*

Ah! Young men, young men,

the

the bleſſing of the Lord upon your ſerious and diligent peruſal of this Treatiſe, may bee a happy meanes to preſerve you from being enſnared and deluded by thoſe monſters, who compaſſe Sea and Land to make proſelytes for hell. Mat. 23. 15

And thus I have given you the reaſons of my dedicating this Treatiſe to the ſervice of your ſouls. I would willingly preſume that it will be as kindly taken; as it is cordially tendred; I hope none of you into whoſe hands it may fall, will ſay as once Antipater King of Macedonia did, when one preſented him with a book treating of happineſſe, his anſwer was (Ou Scholazo) I have no leiſure.

Ah! Young men and women, young men and virgins, as you tender the everlaſting welfare of your ſouls, as you would eſcape hell, and come to heaven, as you would have an intereſt in Chriſt, a pardon in your boſomes, as you would be bleſſed here, & glorious hereafter, find time, find leaſure to read over and over the following treatiſe, which is purpoſely calcu-

lated

lated for your eternal good. But before I go further, I think it needful in some respects to give the world some further account of other reasons or motives that hath prevailed with mee once more to appear in print; and they are these.

First, Having preached a Sermon occasionally upon those words (on which this following discourse is built.) I was earnestly importun'd to print the Sermon, by some worthy friends; I did as long as in modesty I could withstand their desires (judging it not worthy of them) but being at last overcome, and setting about the work, the breathings and comings in of God were such, as hath occasioned that one Sermon to multiply into many. Luther tells us, that when hee first began to turn his back upon Popery, hee intended no more, but to withstand Popish pardons, and selling indulgencies; yet neither would God, or his enemies let him alone, till hee resolved with Moles not to leave a hoof of Popery unopposed, &c.

&c. God many times in the things of the Gospel, carries forth his servants beyond their intentions, beyond their resolutions. But

Secondly, The kinde acceptance, and good quarter that my other peeces have found in the world, and those signal and multiplyed blessings that have followed them, to the winning of many over to Christ, and to the building up of others in Christ, hath incouraged mee to present this Treatise to the World, hoping that the Lord hath a blessing in store for this also. Gracious experiences are beyond notions, and impressions; they are very quickening, and encouraging.

Thirdly, That I might in some measure make up others neglects, whose age, whose parts, whose experiences, whose graces, hath long called upon them to do something considerable this way, and that they may bee provoked by my weak assay to do better, and to make up what is wanting, through my invincible infirmities, and

spiritual

spiritual wants and weaknesses, which are so many, as may well make a sufficient Apology for all the defects, and weaknesses that in this Treatise shall appear to a serious judicious eye. But

2 Cor. 5. 14. 2 Cor. 12. 15. *Solus amor nescit difficultates.* Love knows no difficulties.

Fourthly, The love of Christ and souls hath constrained mee to it; as there is an attractive, so there is a compulsive vertue in divine love. Love to Christ and souls will make a man willing to spend, and bee spent; hee that praies himself to death, that preaches himself to death, that studies himself to death, that sweats himself to death, for the honour of Christ, and good of souls, shall bee no looser in the end: divine love is like a rod of Myrtle, which as Pliny reports, makes the traveller that carries it in his hand, that hee shall never bee faint or weary. Divine love is very operative (si non operatur, non est) if it do not work, it is an argument, it is not at all; divine love like fire is not idle, but active; hee that loves cannot bee barren; love

will

will make the ſoul conſtant and abundant in well doing. God admits none to heaven (ſaith Juſtin Martyr*) but ſuch as can perſwade him by their works, that they love him. The very heathen hath obſerved, that God doth not love his children with a weak womaniſh affection, but with a ſtrong maſculine love; and certainly they that love the Lord ſtrongly, that love him with a Maſculine love; they cannot but lay out their little all for him, and his glory. But*

Seneca.

Fifthly, I obſerve that Satan, and his inſtruments are exceeding buſy and unwearied in their deſigns, attempts, and indeavours, in theſe dayes, to corrupt and poyſon, to defile and deſtroy the young, the tender, the moſt hopeful, and moſt flouriſhing plants among us.

It is ſaid of *Marcellus* the Roman General that he could not bee quiet (*Nec victor, nec victus*) neither Conquered, nor Conquerer; ſuch a one is Satan.

Latimer *told the Clergy in his time, that if they would not learn diligence, and vigilance of the Prophets and Apoſtles, they ſhould learn it of the Devil, who goes up and down his Dioceſes, and acts by an untired*

mutined Power, seeking whom hee may destroy, when the wolves are abroad, the Shepheard should not sleep but watch; yea double his watch, remembring that hee were better have all the blood of all the men in the world upon him, than the blood of one soul upon him, by his negligence or otherwise. Satan is a Lyon, not a Lamb, a roaring Lyon, not a sleepy Lyon, not a Lyon standing still, but a Lyon going up and down as not being contented with the Prey, the many millions of souls hee hath got, he seeks whom he may sip up at a draught, as that word (καταπιειν) in the 1. Pet. 5. 8. imports; his greatest desire, is to fill hell with souls, which should awaken every one to bee active, and to do all that may bee done to prevent his design, and to help forward the salvation of souls.

Chrysost. in Mat. Hom. 5.

Chrysostome compares good pastors, to fountains that ever send forth waters, or Conduits that are alwayes running, though no pail bee put under. But Sixthly,

Sixthly, and Laſtly, I know the whole life of man is but an hour to work in, and the more work any man doth for Chriſt on earth, the better pay he ſhall have when hee comes to Heaven. Every man ſhall at laſt reap as he ſows; Opportunities of doing ſervice for Chriſt, and ſouls, are more worth than a world, therefore I was willing to take hold on this, not knowing how ſoon I may put off this earthly Tabernacle; and remembring that as there is no beleeving, nor repenting in the grave, So there is no praying, preaching, writing, nor Printing in the grave; we had need to be up and doing, to put both hands to it, and to do all wee do with all our might, knowing that the night draws on upon us, wherein no man can work.

1 Cor. 15. ult.

2 Cor. 9. 6

2 Pet. 1. 13, 14

Eccl. 9. 10

John 9. 4

A Chriſtians dying day is the Lords pay day; that is a time to receive wages, not to do work. And thus I have given the World a true account of the Reaſons that moved me to print the following diſcourſe; before I cloſe up, I deſire to ſpeak a

word to young perſons, and another to aged perſons, and then I ſhall take leave of both.

My requeſt to you, who are in the primeroſe of your dayes, is this, if ever the Lord ſhall be pleaſed ſo to own and Crown, ſo to bleſs, and follow this following diſcourſe; as to make it an effectuall means of turning you to the Lord, of winning you to Chriſt, of changing your natures, and converting your ſouls (for ſuch a thing as that, I pray, hope, and beleeve) that then you would do two things for me,

Firſt; That you would never ceaſe, bearing of me upon your hearts when you are in the mount, that I may bee very much under the pourings out of the Spirit, that I may be clear, high, and full in my communion with God, and that I may bee alwayes cloſe, holy, humble, harmleſs and blameleſſe in my walkings with God. And that his work may more and more proſper in my hand.

Pſal. 66. 16
1 Pet. 3. 15

Secondly, That you would by word of mouth, letter, or ſome other way, acquaint

acquaint mee with what the Lord hath done for your ſouls; if he ſhall make mee a ſpiritual father to you, do not hide his grace from mee, but acquaint mee how hee hath made the ſeed that was ſown in weakneſs to riſe in power upon you, and that

Firſt, That I may do what I can to help on that work begun upon you, that your penny may become a pound, your mite a million, your drop an ocean.

Secondly, That I may the better Engliſh ſome impreſſions that have been upon my own ſpirit, ſince I begun this work.

Thirdly, That my joy and thankfulneſs may bee increaſed, and my ſoul more abundantly engaged to that God, who hath bleſt the day of ſmall things to you; ponder theſe ſcriptures, (2 Cor.7.3,4,13. Phil.2. 2.ch. 4.1. *Philemon* ver. 7. 2 John 3.4.) *And then be aſhamed to declare what the Lord hath done for you, if you can.* 1 Theſ.2 19, 20 2 Cor.9.2

Fourthly, it is better to convert one, than to civilize a thouſand, and Mat.25.23 Dan. 12.3 Prov.11.30

will turn more at last to a Ministers account in that day, wherein he shall say, Loe here am I, and the children that thou hast given mee, Isa.8. 18. *such a man (with his spiritual children about him) shall look on God with more comfort and boldness, than those that are onely able to say, Loe here am I, and the many Benefices; here am I, and the many Ecclesiastical dignities, and glories; here am I, and the many hundreds a year, that man had given, and I have gotten. But*

Act.9. 3
Isa.6.5
Mal.2.5,6,7.
&c.

Fifthly, and Lastly, The conversion of others is a secondary and more remote evidence of a mans own renovation and conversion. Paul *was converted himself, before God made him instrumental for others Conversion. Gods usuall method is, to convert by them, who are converted.*

I do not remember any one instance in all the scripture, of Gods converting any by such who have not been converted first themselves; yet I know his grace is free, and the wind

blows

blows where it lists, when it lists, and as it lists.

To aged persons I have a word, and then I have done.

First, To Gray-headed Saints, Ah Friends, ah Fathers, would you see your honour, your happiness, your blessedness! then look into this Treatise, and there you will finde what an unspeakable honour it is to bee an Old disciple, what a glory it is to be good betimes, and to continue so to Old age.

Secondly, To white-headed Sinners, whose spring is past, whose summer is overpast, and who are arrived at the fall of the leaf, and yet have a hell to escape, a Christ to beleeve in, sins to pardon, hearts to change, souls to save, and heaven to make sure, would such be incouraged from scripture grounds to repent, beleeve, and hope; that yet there is mercy for such, let them seriously peruse this Treatise, especially the latter part of it, and there they may finde enough to keep them from despairing, and to incourage them to

adventure their ſouls upon him that is mighty to ſave.

There are many things in this Treatiſe that are of uſe to all, and ſeveral things of moment that are not every day Preach't nor read. I have made it as pleaſureable as time would permit, that ſo it might be the more profitable to the reader, and that I might the better take the young man by (a holy) craft; which is a high point of heavenly wiſdome; there being no wiſdome to that of winning of ſouls. I ſhall now follow this poor peice with my weak prayers, that it may be ſo bleſt from heaven, as that it may bring in ſome, and build up others, and do good to all, and ſo reſt

2 Cor. 12. ch. 15. 2 Prov. 11. 30

Your friend and Servant in the Goſpel of Chriſt,

THOMAS BROOKS.

THE

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Secondly, As thoſe ſix things muſt be *de-*

declined, ſo ſeveral other things muſt be practiſed; if you would be good betimes, as

1 *If you would be good betimes, then you muſt labour to be acquainted with four things betimes, as*

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6 *Lastly, If you would be good betimes, then you must break your covenant with sin betimes; Now to work you to that, you must alwaies look upon sin under these six notions.*

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FINIS.

ERRATA

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Reader,

What other defects thou meeteſt with, thou art deſired in love to paſs over, by reaſon of the Authors abſence from the Preſs.

THE Young-Mans Duty AND EXCELLENCY.

1 KING. 14. ch. 13. v.

And all Israel *shall mourn for him, and bury him: for hee only of* Jeroboam *shall come to the grave, because in him there is found some good thing toward the Lord God of* Israel, *in the house of* Jeroboam.

I SHAL only stand upon the latter part of this Verse, because that affords me matter most suitable to my designe.

-- *Because in him there is found some good thing toward the Lord God of* Israel, *in the house of* Jeroboam.

These words are a commendation of *Abijahs* life, *in him was found some good thing toward the Lord*, &c. when *Abijah* was a Child vers. 3. 12. when hee was in his young and tender years, hee had the seeds of grace in him, he had the Image of God upon him, hee could discern between good and evill, and hee did that which pleased the Lord.

The Hebrew word (Nagnar) translated Child, vers. 3. is very often applied to such as wee call youth, or young men, *Exod.* 24. 5. *Numb.* 6. 11. 1 *Sam.* 2. 17. &c. Of such age and prudence, was *Abijah*, as that he could chuse good and refuse evill, hee was a *Lot* in *Sodom*, hee was good among the bad, the bent and frame of his heart was towards that which was good, when the heart both of his Father and Mother was

נַעַר

Is used for a young man or stripling, Gen. 22. 5. and often for a servant though he be a man of ripe years, Esther 2. 2. Such as one Evangelist calleth young men, Luk. 12. other fellow

was ſet upon evill. *Abijah* beganne to bee good betimes; hee croſt that peſtilent proverb, a young Saint, and an old Devill. Tis the glory and goodneſs of God that hee will take notice of the leaſt good that is in any of his, 1 *Pet.* 3. 6. There was but one good word in *Sarahs* ſpeech to *Abraham*, and that was this, ſhee called him *Lord*, and this God mentions for her honour and commendations, *ſhee called him Lord*: God looks more upon one grain of Wheat, than upon a heap of Chaff; upon one ſhining Pearl than upon a heap of rubbiſh. God findes a Pearl in *Abijah*, and hee puts it into his Crown, to his eternal commendation. *There was found in him ſome good thing towards the Lord*, &c. for the words *There was found in him*, the Hebrew word *Matſa*, ſometimes ſignifies finding without ſeeking, *Iſa.* 65. 1. *I am found of them that ſought mee not*, ſo *Pſal.* 116. *v.* 3. *The ſorrows of death compaſſed mee*,

-- *Becauſe in him there is found ſome good thing toward the Lord God of* Iſrael, *in the houſe of* Jeroboam.

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and the pains of hell got hold upon mee, I found trouble and ſorrow. I found trouble which I lookt not for, I was not ſearching after ſorrow, but I found it. There's an elegancy in the Originall. The pains of hell gat hold upon mee; So wee read, but the Hebrew is; The pains of hell found me (one word ſignifies both,) they found mee, I did not find them. *There was found in Abijah ſome good thing towards the Lord, i. e.* there was found in him without ſearching, or ſeeking, ſome good thing towards the Lord, it was plain and viſible enough, men might ſee and obſerve it without inquiring, or ſeeking, they might runne and read ſome good thing in him towards the Lord.

Secondly, The word ſometimes ſignifies, Finding by ſeeking or enquiry, *Iſa. 55. 6. Seek yee the Lord while hee may bee found, &c.* So upon ſearch and enquiry there was found in *Abijah* (though young) ſome good thing toward the Lord.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Sometimes the word notes the obtaining of that which is ſufficient, *Joſh.* 17. 16. *Numb.* 11. 22. *Judg.* 21. 14. in *Elijah* there was that good in him toward the Lord, that was ſufficient to evidence the work of grace upon him, ſufficient to ſatisfy himſelf and others of the goodneſs, and happineſſe of his condition; though hee died in the prime, and flower of his days, &c.

And in him was found ſome good thing; the Hebrew word (*Tob*) that is here rendered good. Signifies,

Firſt, That which is right and juſt, 2 *Sam.* 15. 3. See thy matters are good and right, *i. e.* juſt and right.

Secondly, that which is profitable, *Deut.* 6. 11. *Houſes full of all good things*, *i. e.* houſes full of all profitable things.

Thirdly, That which is pleaſing, 2 *Sam.* 19. 27. *Do what is good in thine eyes*, *i. e.* do what is pleaſing in thine eyes.

Fourthly, That which is full and compleat, *Gen.* 15. 15. *Thou ſhalt bee buried in a good old age, i. e.* thou ſhalt bee buried when thine age is full and compleat.

Fifthly, That which is joyfull and delightful, 1 *Sam.* 25. 8. *wee come in a good day, i. e.* wee come in a joyful and delightfull day; now put all together and you may ſee that there was found in *Abijah* when hee was young, that which was right and juſt, that which was pleaſing and profitable, and that which was matter of joy and delight.

In the words you have two things that are moſt conſiderable.

Firſt, That this young mans goodneſſe was towards the Lord God of *Iſrael*; many there are that are good, nay, very good towards men, who yet are bad, yea very bad towards God. Some there are who are very kind to the creature, and yet very unkind to their Creator, many mens goodneſſe,

This age affords many ſuch hypocrites ſuch Monſters &c.

neſſe towards the creature is like the riſing Sun, but their goodneſs towards the Lord is like a morning cloud, or as the early dew which is ſoon dried up by the Sun-beams, but *Abijahs* goodneſſe was towards the Lord, his goodneſſe faced the Lord, it look't toward the glory of God. Two things makes a good Chriſtian, good actions, and good aimes; And though a good aim doth not make a bad action good, (as in *Uzzah*) yet a bad aime makes a good action bad (as in *Jehu*) whoſe juſtice was approved, but his policy puniſhed, the firſt Chapter of *Hoſea*, and the fourth verſe, doubtleſs *Abijahs* actions were good, and his aims good; and this was indeed his glory, that his goodneſs was towards the Lord. Hoſ. 6. 4.

There may bee *Malum opus in bona materia*, as in *Jehues* zeal.

Its recorded of the *Catanenſes* that they made a ſtately monument of Kingly magnificence, in remembrance of two Sons who took their aged parents upon

their backs, and carried them through the fire, when their fathers houſe was al in a flame, theſe young men were good towards their Parents; but what is this to *Abijahs goodneſſe towards the Lord*, &c. A man cannot bee good towards the Lord, but he will bee good towards others; but a man may be good towards others that is not good towards the Lord: Oh, that mens practiſes did not give too loud a Teſtimony every day to this aſſertion! &c.

Secondly, Hee was good among the bad, *he was good in the houſe of Jeroboam*, tis in faſhion to ſeem (at leaſt) to bee good among the good; but to bee really good among thoſe that are bad, that are eminently bad, argues not onely a truth of goodneſs, but a great degree of goodneſs; this young man was good *in the houſe of Jeroboam, who made all Iſrael to ſin*, who was naught, who was very naught, who

Happy are thoſe ſouls that with the Sturgion, or Crabfiſh can ſwim againſt the ſtream of cuſtome and example, and that with *Atticus* can cleave to the right, though looſing ſide.

who was ſtark naught; and yet *Abijah*, as the fiſhes which live in the ſalt Sea are freſh, ſo though hee lived in a (ſink) a ſea of wickedneſs; yet hee retained his *goodneſſe towards the Lord*.

They ſay Roſes grows the ſweeter, when they are planted by Garlick, they are ſweet and rare Chriſtians indeed, who hold their goodneſs, and grow in goodneſſe where wickedneſs ſits on the throne, and ſuch a one the Young man in the text was.

To bee Wheat among Tares, Corn among Chaffe, Pearls among Cockles, and Roſes among Thorns, is excellent.

To bee a *Jonathan* in *Sauls* Court, to be an *Obadiah* in *Ahabs* Court, to be an *Abedmelech* in *Zedechias* Court, and to bee an *Abijah* in *Jeroboams* Court, is a wonder, a miracle.

To bee a *Lot* in *Sodome*, to bee an *Abraham* in *Chaldea*, to bee a *Daniel* in *Babylon*, to bee a *Nehemiah* in *Damaſco*, and to bee a

Iob

Job in the land of *Hussa*, is to be a Saint among Devils, and such a one the young man in the Text was.

The Poets affirm that *Venus* never appeared so beautious, as whē she sate by black *Vulcans* side. Gracious souls shine most clear when they bee set by black conditioned persons. *Stephens* face never shin'd so Angelically, so gloriously (in the Church) where all were vertuous, as before the Councill, where all were vitious and malicious. So *Abijah* was a bright Star, a shining Sun in *Jeroboams* Court, which for prophanness and wickedness, was a very hell.

The words that I have chosen to insist upon will afford us several observations, but I shall onely name one, which I intend to prosecute at this time, and that is this, *viz.*

Doct. *That tis a very desirable and commendable thing for young men to bee really good betimes.*

Other

Other Scriptures ſpeak out this to be a truth, beſides what you have in the Text to confirm it, as that of the ſecond of *Chronicles* Chap. 34. 1, 2, 3. verſes. *Joſiah* was eight years old, when hee beganne to reign, and hee reigned in *Jeruſalem* one and thirty years. And hee did that which was right in the ſight of the Lord, and walked in the wayes of *David* his father, and declined neither to the right hand nor to the left; for in the eighth year of his reign, while hee was yet young, hee beganne to ſeek after the God of *David* his father: and in the twelfth year, he beganne to purge *Judah* and *Jeruſalem* from the high places, and the Groves, and the carved Images, and the molten Images. Twas *Obadiahs* honor that hee feared the Lord from his youth. And *Tymothys* crown that he knew the Scripture from a child, and *Johns* joy, that hee found Children walking in the truth

Job 32. 4, 5, 6, 7.

1 King. 18, 12
2 Tim. 3. 15

2 Epiſt. 4. 5.

truth; this revived his good old heart, and made it dance for joy in his bosome; to spend further time in the proving of this truth, would bee but to light candles to see the Sunne at noon.

The grounds and Reasons of this point, *viz. That it is a very desirable and commendable thing for young men to bee really good betimes*; are these that follow,

First, Because the Lord commands it; and divine commands are not to bee disputed but obeyed, In the 12 Chapter of *Ecclesiastes* and the 1 verse, *Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them*: Remember now; I say now; now is an Alarm, it will puzzle the wisdome of a Philosopher, the skill of an Angel to divide: Now, is a Monosyllable in all learned Languages. *Remember now thy Creator*

Deut. 6. 5. ch. 11. 13. v. *Augustine* beginneth one of his Sermons thus (*Ad vos mihi Sermo, O juvenes, flos etatis periculum mentis. August. de tempore Ser.* 248.) to you is my speech O young men, the flower of age, the danger of the mind.

ator, Remember him preſently, inſtantly: for thou doſt not know what a day, what an hour may bring forth; thou canſt not tell what deadly ſin, what deadly temptation, what deadly Judgement may over-take thee; if thou doſt not now, even now *remember thy Creator*.

Remember now thy Creator, Remember to know him, remember to love him, remember to deſire him, remember to delight in him, remember to depend upon him, remember to get an intereſt in him, remember to live to him, and remember to walk with him. *Remember now thy Creator*, the Hebrew is *Creatours*, Father, Son, and Spirit. To the making of man, a Councel was called in Heaven, in the 1. of *Geneſis* and 29 *verſ*. *Remember thy Creatours*, remember the Father, ſo as to know him, ſo as to bee inwardly acquainted with him. Remember the Son, ſo as to beleeve in him, ſo as to reſt upon him,

him, ſo as to imbrace him, and ſo as to make a compleat reſignation of thy ſelf to him. Remember the Spirit, ſo as to hear his voice, ſo as to obey his voice, ſo as to feel his preſence, and ſo as to experiente his influence, &c.

Remember now thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth; hee doth not ſay in the time of thy youth, but *in the dayes of thy youth*, to note that our life is but as a few dayes; tis but a vapour, a ſpan, a flower, a ſhadow, a dream; and therefore *Seneca* ſaith well, *that though death bee before the old mans face, yet hee may bee as near the young mans back, &c.* Mans life is the ſhadow of ſmoak, the dream of a ſhadow, one doubteth whether to call it a dying life, or a living death; ah young men! God commands you to bee good betimes. Remember young men that it is a dangerous thing to neglect one of his commands, who by another is able to command

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mand you into nothing, or into Hell. To act or run crosse to Gods expresse command (though under pretence of Revelation from God) is as much as a mans life is worth; as you may see in that sad story, 1 *King.* 13. *ch.* 24. *verse*, &c. Let young men put all their carnal reasons, though never so many, and weighty, into one scale, and Gods absolute command in the other, and then write Tekel upon all their reasons; They are weighed in the ballance, and found too light. Ah sirs! what God commands must bee put in speedy execution, without denying, or delaying, or disputing the difficulties that attend it. Most young men in these dayes do as the Heathens, when their gods called for a man, they offered a candle; or as *Hercules* offered up a painted man instead of a living. When God calls upon young men to serve him with the Primrose of their youth; they usually put him off til\

Obedientia non disputis Dei mandata, sed facit, Prosper.

till they are overtaken with trembling joynts, dazled eyes, fainting hearts, failing hands, and feeble knees; but this will bee bitterneſſe in the end, &c.

Secondly, Young men muſt bee really good betimes, becauſe they have means and opportunities of being good betimes. Never had men better means, and greater opportunities of being good, of doing good, and of receiving good than now. Ah Lord! how knowing, how beleeving, how holy, how heavenly, how humble might young men bee, were they not wanting to their own ſouls: Young men might bee good, very good, yea eminently good; would they but improve the means of grace, the tenders of mercy, and the knockings of Chriſt by his Word, Works, and Spirit.

Eraſmus. The Ancients painted Opportunity with a hairy forehead, but bald behinde, to ſignifie that while a man hath opportunity before him,

him, hee may lay hold on it, but if hee ſuffer it to ſlip away, hee cannot pull it back again.

How many young men are now in everlaſting chains, who would give ten thouſand worlds (had they ſo many in their hands to give) to injoy but an opportunity to hear one ſermon more, to make one prayer more, to keep one Sabbath more, but cannot? this is their hell, their torment, this is the Scorpion that is ſtill biting, this is the Worm that is alwayes gnawing. Wo, wo to us, that wee have neglected and trifled away thoſe golden opportunities that once wee had, to get our ſins pardoned, our natures changed, our hearts bettered, our conſciences purged, and our ſouls ſaved, &c. * I have read of a King, who having no iſſue to ſucceed him, eſpying one day a well-favoured youth, took him to Court, and committed him to Tutors, to inſtruct him, providing by his will, that if hee prov-

* *Bellarm. In concione de cruciatibus Gehennæ.*

ed fit for government, hee ſhould bee crowned King, if not, hee ſhould bee bound in chains, and made a Gally-ſlave. Now when hee grew to years, the Kings executors perceiving that hee had ſadly neglected thoſe means and opportunities, whereby hee might have been fit for State government, called him before them, and declared the Kings will and pleaſure concerning him, which was accordingly performed, for they cauſed him to bee fettered, and committed to the Gallies. Now what tongue can expreſſe how much hee was affected, and afflicted with his ſad and miſerable ſtate, eſpecially when hee conſidered with himſelf, that now hee is chained, who might have walked at liberty. Now hee is a ſlave, who might have been a King, now hee is over-ruled by Turks, who might once have ruled over Chriſtians; the application is eaſie.

Ah

Ah young men! young men, ſhall Satan take all opportunities to tempt you? ſhall the world take all opportunities to allure you? ſhall wicked men take all opportunities to enſnare you? and to undo you? and ſhall Chriſtian friends take all opportunities to better you? and ſhall Gods faithful Meſſengers take all opportunities to ſave you? and will you? *will you neglect ſo great ſalvation? Plutarch* writes of *Hannibal*, that when hee could have taken *Rome* hee would not, and when hee would have taken *Rome*, hee could not. Many in their youthful dayes, when they might have mercy, Chriſt, pardon, Heaven; they will not, and in old age, when they would have Chriſt, pardon, peace, Heaven, they cannot, they may not. God ſeems to ſay as *Theſius* ſaid once, go ſayes hee, and tell *Creon*, *Theſius* offers thee a gracious offer, yet I am pleaſed to bee friends, if thou wilt ſubmit (this is my firſt

Tis ſtoried of Charles King of Sicily and Jeruſalem, that hee was called *Carolus Cunctator*. Charles the lingerer; this age affords many ſuch lingerers, &c.

meſſage) but if this offer prevail not, look for mee to bee up in arms.

Lord, ſaith Auſtin, I have loved thee late; the greater was his ſins, and the more were his ſorrows.

The third Reaſon, *why Young men ſhould bee really good betimes*, is, becauſe then they will have fewer and leſſer ſins to anſwer for, and repent of, multitudes of ſins and ſorrows are prevented by *being good betimes*. The more wee number our dayes, the fewer ſins wee ſhall have to number. As a coppy is then ſafeſt from blotting, when duſt is put upon it, ſo are wee from ſinning, when (in the time of our youth) wee remember that wee are but duſt. The tears of young penitents do more ſcorch the Devils, than all the flames of Hell, for hereby all their hopes are blaſted, and the great underminer countermined, and blown up. *Mane* is the Devils Verb, hee bids tarry, time enough to repent; but *Mane* is Gods Adverb, hee bids repent early in the morning of thy youth; for then thy ſins will bee fewer,

fewer, and leſſer. Well young men, remember this, hee that will not at the firſt hand buy good council cheap, ſhall at the ſecond hand buy repentance over dear.

Ah young men! young men, if you do not begin to bee good betimes, thoſe ſins that are now as Jewels ſparkling in your eyes, will at laſt bee milſtones about your necks, to ſink you for ever. --Among many things that *Beza* in his laſt will and Teſtament, gave God thanks for, this was the firſt and chief, that hee at the age of ſixteen years, had called him to the knowledge of the truth, and ſo prevented many ſins and ſorrows that otherwiſe would have overtaken him, and have made his life leſſe happy, and more miſerable. Young Saints often prove old Angels, but old ſinners ſeldome prove good Saints, &c.

Pſal. 25. 7. Job 13. 26.

The fourth ground, *why young men ſhould bee really good betimes*, is this, *viz.* becauſe time is a precious Talent that young men muſt be

There is nothing puts a more ſerious frame into a mans ſpirit than to know the worth of his time.

countable for; the ſooner they begin to bee good, the more eaſy will bee their accounts, eſpecially as to that great Talent of time. *Cato* and other heathens, held that account muſt bee given, not only of our labour, but alſo of our leiſure, at the great day it will appear, that they that have ſpent their time in mourning, have done better than they that have ſpent their time in dancing; and they that have ſpent many dayes in humiliation, than they that have ſpent many dayes in idle recreations.

I have read of a devout man, who when hee heard a clock ſtrike, hee would ſay, here is one hour more paſt that I have to anſwer for. Ah young men! as time is very precious, ſo it is very ſhort, time is very ſwift, it is ſuddenly gone, in the 9. of *Job* and the 25. *verſ. My dayes are ſwifter than a Poſt, they flee away, they ſee no good.* The Hebrew word (*Kalal*) tranſlated *ſwifter than*

than a Poſt, ſignifies any thing that is light, becauſe light things are quick in motion.

The Ancients emblem'd time with wings, as it were, not running, but flying. Time is like the Sun, that never ſtands ſtill, but is ſtill a running her race; the Sun did once ſtand ſtill, yea went back, but ſo did never Time. Time is ſtill running, and flying; it is a bubble, a ſhadow, a dream; can you ſeriouſly conſider of this young men, and not *begin to bee good betimes*? ſurely you cannot. Sirs, if the whole earth whereupon wee tread were turned into a lump of gold, it were not able to purchaſe one minute of time. Oh the regreetings of the damned, for miſ-ſpending precious time! Oh what would they not give to bee free, and to injoy the means of grace one hour. Ah with what attention! with what intention! with what trembling and melting of heart! with what hungring and thirſting would they hear the

Sophocles. Phocilides.

Who is there among us that knows how to value time, and prize a day at a due rate. Sen. Epiſt.

Word! Time (ſaith *Bernard*) were a good commodity in hell, and the traffick of it moſt gainful, where, for one day a man would give ten thouſand worlds if he had them; young men, can you in good earneſt beleeve this, and not begin to be good betimes?

A heathen ſaid hee lived no day without a line, that is, he did ſomething remarkable every day.

Ah! young men and women, as you love your precious immortal ſouls, as you would eſcape hell and come to heaven, as you would bee happy in life, and bleſſed in death, and glorious after death, don't ſpend any more of your precious time, in drinking and drabing, in carding, dicing and dancing, don't trifle away your time, don't ſwear away your time, don't whore away your time, don't lye away your time, but beginne to bee good betimes, becauſe Time is a Talent, that God will reckon with you for: Ah! young men and women, you may reckon upon years, many years yet to come, when poſſibly you have not

not ſo many hours to make ready your accompts, it may bee this night you may have a ſummons, and then if your time bee done, and your work to be begunne, in what a ſad caſe will you bee, will you not wiſh that you had never been born?

Seneca was wont to jeer the *Jews* for their ill husbandry, in that they loſt one day in ſeven; meaning their Sabbath; O that it were not too true of the moſt of profeſſors both young and old, that they looſe not onely one day in ſeven, but ſeveral days in ſeven.

Sirs, Time let ſlip cannot bee recal'd, the fooliſh Virgins found it ſo, and *Saul* found it ſo, and *Herod* found it ſo, and *Nero* found it ſo, the *Iſraelites* found it ſo, yea, and *Jacob*, and *Joſiah*, and *David* (though good men) yet they found it ſo to their coſt.

Mat. 25. 5
Judg. 3. 23.
Heb. 3. 17, 18, 19.

The *Egyptians* draw the picture of Time with three heads, the firſt of a greedy Wolf, gaping for time paſt, becauſe it hath rave-

ravenously devoured the memory of so many things past recalling. The

Second of a crowned Lyon, roaring for time present, because it hath the principallity of all actions, for which it calls loud. The

Third of a deceitfull Dogg, fawning for time to come, because it feeds some men with many flattering hopes to their eternal undoing: Ah! young men and women, as you would give up your accounts at last with joy, concerning this Talent of time, with which God hath trusted you, *begin to be good betimes*, &c.

The fifth Reason, *Why young men should bee really good betimes*, and that is, because they will have the greater comfort and joy when they come to bee old, the 71 *Psalm.* 5. 17, 18. compared. *Thou art my hope, O Lord God, thou art my trust from my youth. O God, thou hast taught me*

Seneca (though a Heathen could say, believe me, true joy is no light thing.

me from my youth, and hitherto Ihave declared thy wondrous works. Now alſo when I am old and gray headed, O God, forſake mee not, untill I have ſhewed thy ſtrength, unto this Generation, and thy power unto every one that is to come. *Polycarpus* could ſay, when old, thus many years have I ſerved my Maſter Chriſt, and hitherto hath hee dealt well with mee; if early converts live to bee old, no joy to their joy, their joy will bee the greateſt joy, a joy like to the joy of harveſt, a joy like to their joy that divide the ſpoil, their joy will bee the ſoundeſt joy, the weightieſt joy, the holieſt joy, the pureſt joy, the ſtrongeſt joy, and the moſt laſting joy, the carnal joy of the wicked, the gliſtering (golden) joy of the world-ling, and the flaſhing joy of the hypocrite, is but as the crackling of thorns under a pot, to the joy and comfort of ſuch, who when old, can ſay, with good *Obadiah*, *that they*

Iſa. 9. 3.

they feared the Lord from their youth. If when you are young, your eyes ſhall bee full of tears (for Sinne) when you are old your hearts ſhall bee full of joys. Such ſhal have the beſt wine at laſt

Oh! that young men would beginne to bee good betimes, that ſo they may have the greater harveſt of joy when they come to be old, &c. tis ſad to be ſowing your ſeed, when you ſhould be reaping your harveſt; tis beſt to gather in the ſummer of youth, againſt the winter of old age.

The Sixth Reaſon, *Why young men ſhould bee really good betimes*, and that is, becauſe an eternity of felicity, and glory, hangs upon thoſe few moments that are allotted to them, it was a good queſtion the young man propoſed, *what ſhall I do to inherit eternal life?* I know I ſhall bee eternally happy, or eternally miſerable, eternally bleſt, or eternally cur'ſt, eternally ſav'd, or eternally damn'd, &c.

Luk. 10. 25

O!

O what ſhall I do to inherit eternal life! my cares, my fears, my troubles, are all about eternity, no time can reach eternity, no age can extend to eternity, no tongue can expreſs eternity. Eternity is that (*unum perpetuum hodie*) one perpetual day, which ſhall never have end; what ſhall I do, what ſhall I not do, that I may bee happy to all eternity? I am now young and in the flower of my days; but who knows what a day may bring forth? the greateſt weight hangs upon the ſmalleſt wyers, an eternity depends upon thoſe few hours, I am to breath in this world; O what cauſe have I therefore to bee good betimes, to know God betimes, to beleeve betimes, to repent betimes, to get my peace made, and my pardon ſeal'd betimes, to get my nature changed, my conſcience purged, and my intereſt in Chriſt cleared betimes, before eternity overtakes mee, before my glaſs bee out, my

Æternitas eſt ſemper et immutabile eſſe. The old Romans were out that thought Eternity dwelt in Statues and in Marble monuments.

my Sun ſet, my race run, leaſt the dark night of eternity ſhould overtake mee, and I made miſerable for ever. I have read of one (*Myrogenes*) who when great gifts were ſent unto him, hee ſent them all back again, ſaying, I onely deſire this one thing at your Maſters hand, to pray for mee, that I may be ſaved for eternity. O that all young men and women who make earth their heaven, pleaſures their Paradiſe, that eat the fat, and drink the ſweet, that cloth themſelves richly and crown their heads with roſebuds, that they would ſeriouſly conſider of eternity, ſo as to hear as for eternity, and pray as for eternity, and live as for eternity, and provide as for eternity. That they may ſay with that famous Painter *Zeuxes* (*Æternitati pingo*) I paint for eternity, we do all for eternity, we beleeve for eternity, wee repent for eternity, wee obey for eternity, &c.

Luk. 15.19,20

O that you would not make thoſe

thoſe things eternal for punishment, that cannot bee eternal for uſe: Ah! young men and women, God calls, and the bloud of Jeſus Chriſt calls, and the ſpirit of Chriſt in the Goſpel calls, and the rage of Satan calls; and your ſad ſtate and condition calls; and the happineſs and bleſſedneſs of glorified Saints calls; theſe all call aloud upon you to make ſure a glorious eternity; before you ſail out into that dreadfull Ocean. All your eternall good depends upon the ſhort and uncertain moments of your lives; and if the threed of your lives ſhould bee cut, before a happy eternity is made ſure: woe to you that ever you were born; Do not ſay O young man, that thou art young, and hereafter will bee time enough to provide for eternity, for eternity may bee at the door, ready to carry thee away for ever. Every days experience ſpeaks out eternity to bee as neer the young mans back,

Cur ea quæ ad uſum diuturna eſſe non poſſunt, ad ſupplicium diuturna depoſcet? Ambroſe in Lu. 4. T. 5.

as

as tis before the old mans face.

O graſpe to day the diadem of a bleſſed eternity: leaſt thou art cut off before the morning comes, though there is but one way to come into this world, yet there is a thouſand thouſand ways to bee ſent out of this world; well young men and women remember this, as the motions of the ſoul are quick, ſo are the motions of divine juſtice quick alſo, and if you will not hear the voice of God to day; if you wil not provide for eternity to day. God may ſwear to morrow that you ſhall never enter into his reſt; it is a very ſad and dangerous thing to trifle and dally with God, his word, his offers, our own ſouls, and eternity: therefore let all young People labour to bee good betimes, and not to let him that is goodneſs it ſelf alone, till hee hath made them good, till hee hath given them thoſe hopes of eternity that will both make them good, and keep them

good,

good; that will make them happy, and keep them happy, and that for ever; if all this will not do, then know, that ere long those fears of eternity, of misery, that begets that monster, Despair, which like *Medusa's* head, astonisheth with its very aspect, and strangles hope, which is the breath of the soul, will certainly overtake you; as it is said, *Dum Spiro Spero*, so it may bee inverted *Dum Spero Spiro*, other miseries may wound the spirit, but despair kills it dead; my prayer shall bee that none of you, may ever experience this sad truth, but that you may all bee good in good earnest betimes, which will yeeld you two heavens, a heaven on earth, and a heaven after death.

The seventh Reason, *Why young persons should be really good betimes*, and that is, because they do not beginne to live till they beginne to bee really good, till they beginne to bee good, they

are dead God-wards, and Christ-wards, and heaven-wards, and holiness-wards, till a man beginnes to bee really good, hee is really dead, *Phil.* 2. 1. and that first in respect of working, his works are called dead works, *Heb.* 9. 14. the most glistering services of unregenerate persons are but dead works, because they proceed not from a principle of life, and they lead to death, *Rom.* 6. 21. and leave a sentence of death upon the soul, till it bee wash't off by the bloud of the Lamb.

Respectu operis.

Respectu honoris.

Secondly, Hee is dead in respect of honour, hee is dead to all priviledges, hee is not fit to inherit mercy, who will set the crown of life upon a dead man. The crown of life is only for living Christians, *Rev.* 2. 10. The young Prodigal was dead, till hee begunne to bee good, till hee begunne to remember his fathers house, and to resolve to return home. *My*

Son

Son was dead, but is alive, and the Widow that liveth in pleasure, is dead while shee liveth. When *Josaphat* asked *Barlaam*, how old hee was, hee answered five and forty years old, to whom *Josaphat* replyed, thou seemest to bee seventy, true saith hee, if you reckon ever since I was born; but I count not those years which were spent in vanity: Ah! Sirs you never begin to live, till you beginne to be good in good earnest. There is the life of vegetation, and that is the life of plants; secondly, there is the life of sense, and that is the life of beasts; Thirdly, there is the life of reason, and that is the life of man; Fourthly, there is the life of grace, and that is the life of Saints; and this life you do not beginne to live, till you beginne to bee good; if a living Dogg is better than a dead Lyon, as the wise man speaks, and if a Fly is more excellent than the heavens, because the Fly

Luk. 15. 24.

1 Tim. 5, 6 As tis a reproach to an old man to be in Coats, so tis a disgrace to be an old babe. *i.e.* to be but a babe in grace, when old in years. Heb. 5. 12, 13, 14.

Eccl. 9. 4.

hath life which the heavens hath not, as the Philosopher saith, what a sad dead poor nothing is that person that is a stranger to the life of grace and goodness, that is dead, even whilst he is alive.

Most men will bleed, sweat, vomit, purge, part with an estate, yea with a limb, limbs, yea and many a better thing (*viz.* the honour of God and a good conscience) to preserve their natural lives: as hee crys out, Give mee any deformity, any torment, any misery, so you spare my life; and yet how few, how very few, are to bee found, who make it their work, their business, to attain to a life of goodness, or to beginne to bee good betimes, or to bee dead to the world, and alive to God, rather than to bee dead to God, and alive to the world, this is for a lamentation and shal be for a lamentation, that natural life is so highly prized, & spiritual life so little regarded, &c

Mecenas in *Seneca* had rather live in many diseases than dye. And Homer reporteth of his *Achilles*, that he had rather be a servant to a poor Countrey Clown here, than to be a King to all the Souls departed

The eighth Reason, *Why young per-*

perſons ſhould bee really good betimes, and that is, becauſe the promiſe of finding God, of enjoying God, is made over to an early ſeeking of God, *Prov.* 8. 17. *I love them that love mee, and they that ſeek me early ſhall find me.* Or as the Hebrew hath it, they that ſeek mee in the morning ſhall find me, by the benefit of the morning light wee come to find the things wee ſeek. *Shahhar* ſignifies to ſeek inquiſitively to ſeek diligently, to ſeek timely in the morning. As the *Iſraelites* went early in the morning, to ſeek for Manna. And as Students riſe early in the morning and ſit cloſe to it, to get knowledge; ſo ſaith wiſdome, *they that ſeek mee in the ſpring and morning of their youth, ſhall finde mee.*

שחר

Exod. 16. 21 *Scipio* went firſt to the Capitol, and then to the Senat. *Tully* an heathen frequently called God *Optimum maximum*, the beſt, and greateſt, God is *Omnia ſuper omnia.*

Now to ſeek the Lord early, is to ſeek the Lord firſtly. God hath in himſelf all the good of Angells, of men, and univerſal nature, hee hath all gloryes, all dignities, all riches, all treaſures,

all pleaſures, all comforts, all delights, all joyes, all beatitudes. God is that one infinite perfection in himſelf, which is eminently and virtually all perfections of the creatures, and therfore hee is firſtly to be ſought. Abſtracts do better expreſs him, than Concretes and adjectives; hee is, being, bonity, power, wiſdome, juſtice, mercy, goodneſs, and love it ſelf, and therefore worthy to bee ſought before all other things. Seek yee firſt the good things of the mind, ſaith *Philoſophy*, and don't Divinity ſay as much?

Cicero.

Again, To ſeek early is to ſeek opportunely, to ſeek while the opportunity does preſent, *Judg.* 9. 33. *Thou ſhalt riſe early, and ſet upon the City*; that is, thou ſhalt opportunely ſet upon the City. Such there have been, who by giving a glaſs of water opportunely, have obtained a kingdome, as you may ſee in the ſtory of *Thamaſtus*, and

Daies of grace have their dates, therefore take heed of ſaying *Cras, Cras*, to morrow, to morrow.

and King *Agrippa.*

Ah! Young men and women, you do not know, but that by an early, by an opportune seeking of God, you may obtain a kingdom that shakes not, and glory that passeth not away. There is a season wherein God may bee found, *Seek ye the Lord while hee may bee found, call yee upon him while hee is neer,* and if you slip this season, you may seek him, and miss him. *Though they cry unto mee, I will not hearken unto them; when yee make many prayers I will not hear. Then shall they cry unto the Lord, but he will not hear. Then shall they call upon mee, but I will not answer; they shall seek mee early but shall not finde mee.* This was *Sauls* misery, *The Philistines are upon mee, and God will not answer mee,* 'tis justice that they should seek and not finde at last, who might have found, had they but sought seasonably and opportunely, &c.

Heb. 12. 28

Isa. 55. 6

Jer. 11. 11
Isa. 1. 15
Mic. 3, 4
Prov. 1. 28

Again, to ſeek early, is to ſeek earneſtly, affectionately. *With my ſoul have I deſired thee in the night, yea with my ſpirit within mee will I ſeek thee early.* The Hebrew word ſignifies both an earneſt, and an early ſeeking in the morning, the ſpirits are up, and men are earneſt, lively, and affectionate. Ah ſuch a ſeeking, ſhall certainly bee crowned with finding!

Iſa. 26. 9.

My voice ſhalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct (Heb. martial) *my prayer unto thee, and will look up;* (Hebrew, look out like a watchman.) *Let all thoſe that put their truſt in thee, rejoyce; let them ever ſhout for joy; becauſe thou defendeſt them,* (Hebrew, thou covereſt over, or protecteſt them) *Let them alſo that love thy Name, bee joyful in thee, for thou, Lord, wilt bleſſe the Righteous, with favour wilt thou compaſſe him* (Hebrew crown him) *as with a ſhield.* None have ever thus ſought the Lord, but they have, or certainly ſhall finde

Pſal. 5. 3. 11, 12.

אֶעְרֹךְ
וְאַצְפֶּה

finde him. *Seek, and yee ſhall finde,* Matth. 7. 7. *your heart ſhall live that ſeek God,* Pſal. 69. 32. *The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much,* James 5. 16. or as the Greek hath it, *the working-prayer of a righteous man availeth much;* that prayer that ſets the whole man awork, will work wonders in Heaven, in the heart, and in the earth. Earneſt prayer like *Sauls* ſword, and *Jonathans* bow, never return empty. One ſpeaking of *Luther,* who was a man very earneſt in praier, ſaid, (*hic homo potuit apud Deum quod voluit,* this man could have what hee would of God, &c.

ἐνεργουμένη. It ſignifies ſuch a working as notes the liveliest activity that can bee.

Again, to ſeek early, is to ſeek chiefly, primarily, after this or that thing; what wee firſt ſeek, wee ſeek as chief. Now to ſeek the Lord early, is to ſeek him primarily, chiefly, In the 63. *Pſal.* and the 1. *verſ. Thou art my God, early will I ſeek thee;* that is, I will ſeek thee as my choiceſt and my chiefeſt good. God is *Alpha,* the

Omne bonum in ſummo bono.

the fountain from whence all grace ſprings; and *Omega*, the Sea to which all glory runs; and therefore early and primarily to bee ſought. God is a perfect good, a ſolid good (*id bonum perfectum dicitur, cui nil accedere, ſolidum cui nil decedere poteſt. Lactantius*) that is a perfect good to which nothing can bee added, that a ſolid, from which nothing can bee ſpared; ſuch a good God is, and therefore early and chiefly to bee ſought. God is a pure and ſimple good, hee is a light in whom there is no darkneſſe, a good, in whom there is no evil. The goodneſſe of the Creature is mixt, yea that little goodneſs that is in the Creature is mixt with much evil, but God is an immixt good, hee is good, hee is a pure good, he is all over good, hee is nothing but good. God is an Al-ſufficient good, *walk before mee, and bee upright, I am God Al-ſufficient*, in the 17. of *Geneſis* and the 1. *verſ.* *Habet omnia, qui habet*

1 John 1. 5.

Quicquid eſt in Deo, eſt ipſe Deus.

habet habentem omnia, Aug. Hee hath all, that hath the haver of all. God hath in himself all power to defend you, all wisdome to direct you, all mercy to pardon you, all grace to inrich you, all Righteousnes to cloath you, all goodnesse to supply you, and all happinesse to crown you. God is a satisfying good, a good that fills the heart, and quiets the soul, in the 33. of *Genesis* and the 11. *vers. I have enough*, saith good *Jacob*, *I have all*, saith *Jacob*, for so the Hebrew hath it (*Cholli*) I have all, I have all comforts, all delights, all contents, &c. In having nothing, I have all things, because I have Christ, having therefore all things in him. I seek no other reward, for *hee is the universal reward*, saith one. As the worth and value of many peeces of silver is to bee found in one peece of gold. So all the petty excellencies that are scattered abroad in the Creatures are to bee found in

Cant. 2. 3.

in God, yea all the whole volum of perfections which is ſpread through Heaven and Earth is epitomized in him. No good below him that is the greateſt good, can ſatisfie the ſoul; a good wife, a good child, a good name, a good eſtate, a good friend, cannot ſatisfie the ſoul; theſe may pleaſe, but they cannot ſatisfie. All abundance, if it bee not my God, is to mee nothing but poverty and want, ſaid one. Ah that young men and women would but in the morning of their youth, ſeek, yea ſeek early, ſeek earneſtly; ſeek affectionately, ſeek diligently, ſeek primarily, and ſeek unwearyedly this God, who is the greateſt good; the beſt good, the moſt deſirable good: who is a ſutable good, a pure good: a ſatisfying good, a total good, and an eternal good.

Omnis copia quæ non eſt Deus meus, mihi egeſtas eſt. Aug. Soliloq. c. 13.

The ninth Reaſon, *why young perſons ſhould be really good betimes*, and that is, becauſe the time of youth is the choiceſt and fitteſt time for ſervice. Now your parts

are

are lively, ſenſes freſh, memory ſtrong, and nature vigorous; the dayes of your youth are the ſpring and morning of your time, they are the firſt-born of your ſtrength, therefore God requires your non-age as well as your dotage; the wine of your times, as well as the lees, as you may ſee typified to you in the firſt fruits, which were dedicated to the Lord. And the firſt-born. The time of youth is the time of ſalvation, it is the acceptable time, it is thy ſummer, thy harveſt time. O young man, therefore do not ſleep, but up, and bee doing, awaken thy heart, rouſe up thy ſoul, and improve all thou haſt; put out thy reaſon, thy ſtrength, thy all, to the treaſuring up of heavenly graces, precious promiſes, divine experiences, and ſpiritual comforts, againſt the winter of old age, and then old age will not bee to thee an evil age, but as it was to *Abraham a good old age*; do not put off God with fair

The dayes of youth are called, *ætas bona, in Cicero*, and *ætas optima, in Seneca.*

Exod. 13. 2.
Exod. 22. 9.

Gen. 25. 28.

fair promises, and large pretences till your last sands are running, and the dayes of dotage hath overtaken you. That's a sad word of the Prophet, *cursed bee the deceiver which hath in his flock a male, and yet offereth to the Lord a corrupt thing.* Ah young men and women, who are like the Almond tree, you have many males in the flock, your strength is a male in your flock, your time is a male in the flock, your reason is a male in the flock, your parts are a male in the flock, and your gifts are a male in the flock; now if hee bee curst that hath but one male in his flock, and shall offer to God a corrupt thing, a thing of no worth, of no value, how will you bee curst, and curst, curst at home, and curst abroad, curst temporally, curst spiritually, and curst eternally, who have many males in your flock, and yet deal so unworthily, so fraudulently, and falsе heartedly with God, as to put him off with the dreggs of your

Mal. 1. 14.

Jer. 1. 11 The Almond tree blossomes in January, (while it is yet Winter) and the fruit is ripe in March.

your time, and ſtrength, while you ſpend the Prime-roſe of your youth in the ſervice of the world, the Fleſh, and the Devil. Mat. 21. 20

The Fig-tree in the Goſpel, that did not bring forth fruit timely and ſeaſonably, was curſt to admiration, the time of youth is the time and ſeaſon for bringing forth the fruits of righteouſneſs and holineſs; and if theſe fruits bee not brought forth in their ſeaſon, you may juſtly fear, that the curſes of heaven will ſecretly and inſenſibly ſoak and ſink into your ſouls, and then woe wo to you that ever you were born, the beſt way to prevent this hell of hels is to give God the cream and Flower of your youth, your ſtrength, your time, your Talents; veſſels that are betimes ſeaſoned with the ſavour of life, never looſe it, *Pro.* 22. 6.

The Tenth Reaſon, *Why young perſons ſhould bee really good (in good earneſt) betimes*, and that is, becauſe Death may ſud-

denly

denly and unexpectedly seize upon you, you have no lease of your lives. Youth is as fickle as old age, the young man may finde Graves enough of his length in buriall places; as green wood, and old logs meet in one fire, so young Sinners, and old Sinners meet (in one hell) and burn together; when the young man is in his spring, and prime, then hee is cut off and dies, one dieth in his full strength (or in the strength of his perfection, as the Hebrew hath it) being wholly at ease and quiet. His breasts are full of milk, and his bones are moistened with marrow. *Davids* children dies when young, so did *Jobs*, and *Jeroboams*, &c. Every days experience tell us, that the young mans life is as much a vapour, as the old mans is.

Pares nascuntur, pares moriuntur, in the womb and in the Tomb they are all alike.

Job. 21, 23, 24

'Tis an Allegorical description of the highest prosperity.

I have read of an *Italian* Poet, who brings in a propper young man rich and potent, discoursing with Death, in the habit of

a

a mower with his Sythe in his hand, cutting down the life of man (*For all fleſh is graſs, Iſa.* 40. 6.) and wilt thou not ſpare any mans perſon ſaith the young man; I ſpare none ſaith death, mans life is but a day, a ſhort day, a winters day, oft-times the Sun goes down upon a man before it be wel up; your day is ſhort, your work is great, your journey long, and therefore you ſhould riſe early and ſet forward towards heaven betimes, as that man does that hath a long journey to go in a winters day.

Deaths motto is *Nulli cedo*, I yeild to none.

The life of man is abſolutely ſhort. *Behold thou haſt made my days as a hands breadth.* The life of man is comparatively ſhort, and that if you compare mans life now to what hee might have reacht; had hee continued in innocency. Sinne brought in death, death is a fall that came in by a fall; or if you compare mans life now, to what they did reach to before the Flood, then ſeve-

Pſal. 39. 5

Gen. 9

ral lived, ſix, ſeven, eight, nine hundred years; or if you compare mans dayes with the days of God. *Mine age is as nothing before thee*; or if you compare the dayes of man to the dayes of eternity.

Pſal. 39. 5

The Heathen could ſay, that the whole life of man ſhould be nothing elſe but (*meditatio mortis*) a meditation of death

Ah! Young men, young men, can you ſeriouſly conſider of the brevity of mans life, and trifle away your time, the offers of Grace, your precious ſouls, and eternity? &c. ſurely you cannot, ſurely you dare not; if you do but in good earneſt ponder upon the ſhortneſs of mans life. It is recorded of *Philip* King of *Macedon*, that he gave a penſion to one to come to him every day at dinner, and to cry to him (*memento te eſſe mortalem*) Remember thou art but mortal.

Ah! Young men and old, had need bee often put in mind of their mortality, they are too apt to forget that day, yea to put farre from them the thoughts of that

that day. I have read of three that could not endure to hear that bitter word, death, mentioned in their ears, and ſurely this age is full of ſuch monſters.

And as the life of man is very ſhort, ſo it is very uncertain, now well, now ſick, alive this hour, and dead the next. Death doth not always give warning before hand, ſometimes hee gives the mortal blow ſuddenly, hee comes behind with his dart, and ſtrikes a man at the heart, before hee ſaith, *have I found thee O my enemy?* *Eutichus* fell down dead ſuddenly, *Act.* 20.19. Death ſuddenly areſted *Davids* Sons, and *Jobs* Sons, *Auguſtus* dyed in a complement, *Galba* with a ſentence, *Veſpaſian* with a jeſt, *Zeuxes* dyed laughing at the picture of an old woman, which hee drew with his own hand, *Sophocles* was choaked with the ſtone in a Grape, *Diodorus* the Logician dyed for ſhame, that hee could not anſwer a joculary

Petrach telleth of one who being invited to dinner, the next day, anſwered, *Ego a multis annis craſtinum non habui.* I have not had a morrow for this many years.

queſtion propounded at the Table by *Stilpo*, *Joannes Meaſius*, preaching upon the raiſing of the woman of *Naims* ſonne from the dead, within three houres after dyed himſelf.

Ah! Young men and women, have you not cauſe, great cauſe to bee good betimes? for death is ſudden in his approaches, nothing more ſure than death, and nothing more uncertain than life; therefore know the Lord betimes, turn from your ſinnes betimes, lay hold on the Lord, and make peace with him betimes, that you may never ſay as *Cæſar Borgias* ſaid, when hee was ſick to death, when I lived (ſaid hee) I provided for every thing but death, now I muſt dye and am unprovided to dye, &c.

The Eleventh Reaſon, *Why young perſons ſhould bee really good betimes*, and that is, becauſe tis ten to one, nay, a hundred to ten if ever they are converted, if

if they are not converted when they are young.

God usually begins with such betimes, that hee hath had thoughts of love and mercy towards from everlasting; the instances cited to prove the Doctrin, confirms this argument; and if you look abroad, in the world, you shall hardly finde one Saint among a thousand, but dates his conversion from the time of his youth. 'Twas the young ones that got through the wilderness into *Canaan*. If the Tree do not bud, and blossome, and bring forth fruit in the Spring, it is commonly dead all the year after; if in the spring, and morning of your daies you do not bring forth fruit to God; it is a hundred to one, that ever you bring forth fruit to him, when the evil dayes of old age shall overtake you, wherein you shall say, you have no pleasure. For as the Son of *Syrach* observes, if thou hast gathered nothing in thy youth, what

Hos. 11. 1. When Israel was a child, then I loved him, &c.

Numb. 26. 64.

An Hebrew Doctor observes that of those six hundred thousand that went out of Egypt, there were but two persons that entered Canaan.

Eccles. 25. 3.

what canst thou finde in thy age? tis rare, very rare, that God sows and reaps in old age, usually God sows the seed of grace in youth, it yeelds the harvest of joy in age. Though true repentance be never too late, yet late repentance is seldome true. Millions are now in Hell, who have pleased themselves with the thoughts of after repentance. The Lord hath made a promise to late repentance, but where hath he made a promise of late repentance: yea what can bee more just and equal, that such should seek, and not finde, who might have found, but would not seek; and that hee should shut his ears against their late prayers, who have stopt their ears against his early calls? The Ancient warriours would not accept an old man into their army, as being unfit for service, and dost thou think that God will accept of thy dry bones, when Satan hath suckt out all the marrow? What Lord, what Master will take

Pro. 1. 24. -32.

take such into their service, who have all their dayes served their enemies, and will God? will God? The *Circassians* (a kinde of Mongrel Christians) are said to divide their life betwixt sin and devotion, dedicating their youth to rapine, and their old age to repentance; if this bee thy case, I would not bee in thy case for ten thousand worlds. Breerw. Enqui.

I have read of a certain great man, that was admonished in his sickness to repent, who answered, that hee would not repent yet, for if hee should recover, his companions would laugh at him; but growing sicker, and sicker, his friends pressed him again to repent, but then hee told them that it were too late; (*Quia jam judicatus sum, & condemnatus*) for now said hee, I am judged and condemned. Beda hath this story.

The twelfth and last Reason, *why young men should bee really good betimes*, and that is, because else they will never attain to the

honour of being old disciples. It is a very great honour to bee an old Disciple. Now this honour none reach to, but such as are converted betimes, but such as turn to the Lord in the spring, and morning of their youth. It is no honour for an old man to bee in coats, nor for an old man to bee a babe in grace. An A. B. C. old man is a sad and shameful sight; O but it is a mighty honour to a man when hee is old, that hee can date his conversion from the morning of his youth. Now that it is an honour to bee an old Disciple, I shall prove by an induction of particulars. As,

What more ridiculous than (*puer centum annorum*) a child of an hundred years old?

First, All men will honour an old Disciple. *Prov.* 16. 31. *The hoary head is a Crown of glory, if it bee found in the way of Righteousness.* God requires that the aged should bee honoured, *Levit.* 19. 32. *Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man* (the old man here, is by some expounded the wise man)

A Crown is a very glorious thing, but there are but few of them.

and

and fear thy God; I am the Lord. Hoarineſs is only honourable, when found in a way of Righteouſneſs; a white head accompanied with a holy heart, makes a man truly honourable. There are two glorious ſights in the world, the one is, a young man walking in his uprightneſſe; and the other is, an old man walking in wayes of Righteouſneſſe; 'twas *Abrahams* honour, that hee went to his grave in a good old age, or rather as the Hebrew hath it, with a good gray head; many there bee that goes to their graves with a gray head, but this was *Abrahams* crown, that hee went to his grave with a good gray head; had *Abrahams* head been never ſo gray, if it had not been good, it would have been no honour to him; a hoary head, when coupled with an unſanctified heart, is rather a curſe, than a bleſſing, when the head is as white as Snow, and the ſoul as black as Hell. God uſually gives up ſuch to the greateſt

Gen. 25. 8.

Iſa. 65. 20.

Lam. 5. 12.

Deut. 28. 49. 50

test scorn and contempt. Princes are hanged up by their hands, the faces of Elders were not honoured, and this God had threatned long before. *The Lord shall bring against thee a Nation from far, a Nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young.* I have read of *Cleanthes*, who was wont sometimes to chide himself: *Ariston* wondering thereat, asked him whom chidest thou, *Cleanthes* laughed, and answered, I chide an old fellow (*qui canos quidem habet, sed mentem non habet*) who hath gray hairs indeed, but wants understanding and prudence worthy of them. The Application I will leave to the gray heads, and gray beards of our time, who have little else to commend them to the world but their hoary heads, and snowy-beards.

בישישים In the Ancient is wisdome.

Secondly, God usually reveals himself most to old Disciples, to old Saints, *Job* 12. 12. *With the Ancient is wisdome, and in length of*

dayes

dayes understanding. God usually manifests most of himself to aged Saints, they usuall pray most, and pay most, they labour most, and long most after the choicest manifestations of himself, and of his grace, and therefore he opens his bosome most to them, and makes them of his Cabinet-Councel. *Gen.* 18, 17, 19. *And the Lord said, shall I hide from* Abraham *that thing which I do, for I know him, that hee will command his Children, and his houshold after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice, and judgement, that the Lord may bring upon* Abraham *that which hee hath spoken of him. Abraham* was an old friend, and therefore God makes him both of his Court, and Councel; wee usually open our hearts most freely, fully, and familiarly to old friends. So doth God to his ancient friends. Ah what a blessed sight and injoyment of Christ had old *Simeon*, that made his very heart to dance in him! *Now Lord, lettest thou thy*

Valentianius the Emperors motto was (*amicus veterimus optimus*) an old friend is best.

Luk. 2. 25, 26, 27, 28.

thy ſervant to depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation, &c. I have ſeen him, who is my light, my life, my love, my joy, my crown, my heaven, my all; therefore *now let thy ſervant depart in peace.* So *Anna*, when ſhee was fourſcore and four years old, was ſo filled with the diſcoveries and injoyments of Chriſt, that ſhee could not but declare what ſhee had taſted, felt, ſeen, heard, and received from the Lord: Shee was ripe, and ready to diſcover, the fulneſs, ſweetneſs, goodneſs, excellency, and glory of that Chriſt whom ſhee had long loved, feared, and ſerved. So *Paul* lived in the light, ſight, and ſweet injoyments of Chriſt, when aged, in years, in grace. So when had *John* that glorious viſion of Chriſt among the golden Candleſticks, and thoſe diſcoveries and manifeſtations, of the ruine of *Rome*, the fall of Antichriſt, the caſting the beaſt and falſe Prophet into a lake

Verſ. 36, 37, 38.

Phil. 4. 5, 7, 9.

Rev. 1. 7. — ult.

lake of fire; the conqueſt of the Kingdomes of the world, by Chriſts bow and ſword, the binding up of Satan, and the new *Jeruſalem*, comming down from God out of heaven, but when he was old, when hee was aged in years, and in Grace?

The Lord ſpeaks many a ſecret in the ears of aged Saints, of old Chriſtians, which young Chriſtians are not acquainted with, as that phraſe imports, 2 *Sam.* 7. 27. *Thou O Lord God of hoſt, hath revealed to thy ſervant*, ſo you read it in your books, but in the Hebrew it is, Lord thou haſt revealed this to the ear of thy ſervant. Some wonder how that word to the ear comes to bee left out in your books, in which indeed the Emphaſis lyes, wee will tell many things in an old friends ear, which wee will not acquaint young ones with. So doth God many times whiſper an old Diſciple in the ear, and acquaints him with ſuch

גליתה אזן
Galitha ethozen.

such things that hee hides from those that are of younger years. And by this you may see what an honor it is to be an old Disciple.

Heb. 5. 11, 12, 13, 14. Yet as *Solon* was not ashamed to say, that in his old age he was a learner, so those that are the greatest Artists in Christianity will confesse, that they are still but learners.

Thirdly, An old Disciple, an old Christian, hee hath got the art of serving God, the art of Religion, Got the art of hearing, the art of praying, the art of meditating, the art of repenting, the art of beleeving, the art of denying his natural self, his sinful self, his Religious self. All Trades have their mystery and difficulty; so hath the trade of Christianity; young Christians usually bungle in religious work, but old Christians acquit themselves like workmen that need not bee ashamed. A Young Carpenter gives more blows, and makes more chips, but an old Artist doth the most, and best work; a young Christian may make most noise in religious duties, but an old Christian makes the best work. A young Musitian may play more quick and

and nimble, upon an inſtrument than an old, but an old Muſitian hath more skill and judgement than a young, the application is eaſy; And by this you may alſo ſee, what an honour it is, to be an old Chriſtian, &c.

Fourthly, An old Diſciple, an old Chriſtian, is rich in ſpiritual experiences, O the experiences that hee hath of the ways of God, of the workings of God, of the word of God, of the love of God. O the divine ſtories that old Chriſtians can tell of the power of the Word, of the ſweetneſs of the Word, of the uſe-fulneſs of the Word, as a light to lead the ſoul, as a ſtaffe to ſupport the ſoul, as a ſpur to quicken the ſoul, as an anchor to ſtay the ſoul, and as a cordial to comfort and ſtrengthen the ſoul! O the ſtories that he can tell you concerning the love of Chriſt, the bloud of Chriſt, the offices of Chriſt, the merits of Chriſt, the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, the graces

1 John 2. 13

Pſ. 119. 49, 50. Old men love to ſpeak of ancient things.

graces of Christ, and the influence of Christ. O the stories that an old Disciple can tell you of the indwellings of the spirit, of the operations of the spirit, of the teachings of the spirit, of the leadings of the spirit, of the sealings of the spirit, of the witnessings of the spirit, and of the comforts and joyes of the spirit. O the stories that an old Christian can tell you, of the evil of Sinne, the bitternes of Sinne, the deceitfulnes of Sinne, the prevalency of Sin, and the happines of conquest over Sinne. O the stories that hee can tell you of the snares of Satan, the devices of Satan, the temptations of Satan, the rage of Satan, the malice of Satan, the watchfulnes of Satan, and the wayes of triumphing over Satan. As an old Souldier can tell you of many battels, many scarres, many wounds, many losses, and many victories, even to admiration; So an old Saint is able

to

to tell you many divine stories even to admiration.

Pliny writes of the Crocodile, that shee grows to her last day. So aged Saints, they grow rich in spirituall experiences to the last. An old Christian being once asked, if he grew in goodness, Answered yea, doubtless I do, for God hath said, *The Righteous shall flourish like the Palm-tree* (now the Palm-tree never looseth his leaf, or fruit, saith *Pliny*) *hee shall grow like a Cedar in Lebanon. Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the Courts of our God; They shall still bring forth fruit in old age, they shall bee fat and flourishing.* A fellow to this promise *Isaiah* mentions, *Hearken unto me O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are born by mee, from the belly, which are carried from the womb; and even to your old age; I am hee, and even to hoary hairs, will I carry you, I have made, and*

Hos. 14. 5, 6, 7

Psal. 92. 12, 13, 14.

Isa. 46. 3, 4

I will bear, even I will carry, and will deliver you. There is nothing more commendable in fulnes of age, than fulnes of knowledge and experience; nor nothing more honourable than to see ancient Christians, very much acquainted with the Ancient of dayes. It is a brave sight to see ancient Christians like the Almond-Tree. Now the Almond-tree doth flourish, and is full of blossomes in the winter of old age, for as *Pliny* tells us, the Almond-Tree doth blossome in the month of *January*; experiments in religion are beyond notions, and impressions; a sanctified heart, is better than a silver tongue, no man so rich, so honourable, so happy, as the old Disciple, that is rich in spirituall experiences, and yet there is no Christian so rich in his experiences but hee would be richer. As *Iustinian* said, that when hee had one foot in the grave, hee would have the other in the School.

Dan. 7. 9, 13, 22

The Lawyer.

School. So though an old Disciple hath one foot in the grave, yet hee will have the other in Christs School, that he may still bee treasuring up more and more divine experiments; and by this also you see, *what an honour it is to bee an old Disciple, &c.*

Fifthly, An old Disciple is very stout, couragious, firm, and fixt in his resolutions; an old Christian is like a pillar, a rock, nothing can move him, nothing can shake him, what is sucked in in youth, will abide in old age; old souldiers are stout and couragious, nothing can daunt nor discourage them. When *Joshua* was an hundred and ten years old, O how couragious and resolute was hee! *And if it seem evil unto you, to serve the Lord, chuse you this day whom you will serve, whether the Gods that your Fathers served, that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell; but as for mee and my house,*

Psa. 44. 9. ---- ult.

Josh. 24. 15, 29

wee will serve the Lord. And it came to passe, after these things, that Joshua *the Son of* Nun, *the servant of the Lord dyed, being an hundred and ten years old.* *Considius* a Senator of *Rome* told *Cæsar* boldly that the Senators durst not come to council for fear of his souldiers; hee replyed, why then dost thou go to the Senate? hee answered, because my age takes away my fear. Ah! none so couragious, none so divinely fearlesse; none so careless in evil dayes as ancient Christians. An old Christian knows, that that good will do him no good, which is not made good by perseverance; his resolution is like that of *Gonsalvo*, who protested to his souldiers, shewing them *Naples*, that hee had rather die one foot forwards, than to have his life secured for long by one foot of retreat. Shall such a man as I am flee, said undaunted *Nehemia*? he will courageously venture life and limb, rather than by one foot of retreat, discredit

Neh. 6. 11.

credit profeſſion with the reproach of fearfulneſs. It was a brave magnanimous ſpeech of *Luther*, when dangers from oppoſers did threaten him, and his aſſociates; come (ſaith hee) let us ſing the forty ſixth *Pſalm*, and then let them do their worſt. When *Polycarpus* was fourſcore and ſix years old, hee ſuffered Martyrdome courageouſly, reſolutely, and undauntedly.

When one of the ancient Martyrs was very much threatned by his perſecutors, hee replyed, there is nothing of things viſible, nothing of things inviſible that I fear; I will ſtand to my profeſſion of the name of Chriſt, and contend earneſtly for the Faith once delivered to the Saints, come on it what will. Old Diſciples, old Souldiers of Chriſt, they have the heart and courage of *Shammah*, one of *Davids* worthies, who ſtood and defended the field, when all the reſt fled. The Hebrews call a young man

Ariſtotle, (though a heathen) could ſay that in ſome caſes a man had better loſe his life, than bee cowardly. Ariſt. Ethic. 3. cap. 1.

2 Sam. 23. 11, 12.

Mat. 19. 20. 21, 22.

Nagnar, which ſprings from a root that ſignifies to ſhake off, or to bee toſſed to and fro, to note how fickle, and how conſtant in inconſtancy young men are, they uſually are perſons either of no reſolution for good, or of weak reſolution; they are too often wonn with a Nut, and loſt with an Apple: but now aged Chriſtians in all Earthquakes, they ſtand faſt, like *Mount-Zion*, that cannot bee removed. And by this alſo you may ſee, *what an honour it is, to bee an old Diſciple*, an old Chriſtian.

Rom. 6. 6. Gal. 5. 24. ch. 6. 14.

Sixthly, An old Diſciple, an old Chriſtian, is prepared for death, hee hath been long a dying to ſin, to the world, to friends, to ſelf, to relations, all, and no man ſo prepared to dye, as he that thus daily dyes. An old Diſciple hath lived ſincerely to Chriſt, hee hath lived eminently to Chriſt, hee hath lived in all conditions, and under all changes to Chriſt, he hath lived exemplarily to Chriſt,

Rom. 14. 7, 8. Phil. 1. 21, 22, 23.

hee

hee hath lived long to Christ, and therefore the more prepared to dye, and bee with Christ. An old Disciple hath a crown in his eye, a pardon in his bosome, and a Christ in his arms, and therefore may sweetly sing it out with old *Simeon*, *Lord, now lut thy servant depart in peace.* As *Hillary* said to his soul, soul, thou hast served Christ this seventy years, and art thou afraid of death? go out soul, go out. Many a day said old *Cowper* have I sought death with tears, not out of impatience, distrust, or perturbation, but because I am weary of sin, and fearful to fall into it. *Nazianzen* calls upon the King of terrors, devour mee, devoure mee. And *Austin*, when old, could say, shall I dye ever? yes, or shall I die at all? yes, why then Lord if ever, why not now? why not now? so when *Modestus* the Emperors Lieutenant threatned to kill *Bazil*, he answered, if that be all, I fear not; yea, your

Zeno a wise heathen said, I have no fear but of old age

Cyprian could receive the cruellest sentence of death with *a Deo gratias*. God I thank thee.

Master cannot more pleasure mee, than in sending mee unto my heavenly Father, to whom I now live, and to whom I desire to hasten. I cannot say as hee (said old Mr. *Stephen Martial* a little before his death) I have not so lived, that I should now bee afraid to dye, but this I can say, I have so learned Christ, that I am not afraid to dy. Old Christians have made no more to dye, than to dine. It is nothing to dye when the Comforter stands by; Old Disciples know that to dye is but to lye down in their beds, they know that their dying day is better than their birth day, and this made *Solomon* to prefer his Coffin before his Crown, the day of his dissolution, before the day of his coronation. The Ancients were wont to call the dayes of their death, *Natalia*, not dying days, but birth days.

Isa. 57. 1, 2

Eccl. 7. 1

The Jews to this day stick not to call their *Golgotha's Batte Caiim*, the houses or places of the Living

Living; old Chriſtians know that death is but an entrance into life, tis but a paſſeover, a jubile, tis but the Lords Gentleman-uſher to conduct them to heaven, and this prepares them to dye and makes death more deſirable than life, and by this you may ſee, *that it is an honour to bee an old Diſciple.*

Seventhly, An Old Diſciple, an old Chriſtian, ſhall have a great reward in heaven, Old Chriſtians have done much, and ſuffered much for Chriſt, and the more any man doth, or ſuffers for Chriſt here, the more glory hee ſhall have hereafter. Twas the ſaying of an old Diſciple upon his dying bed, hee is come, hee is come (meaning the Lord) with a great reward for a little work. *Agrippa* having ſuffered impriſonment for wiſhing *Cajus* Emperor, the firſt thing *Cajus* did when hee came to the Empire, was to prefer *Agrippa* to a Kingdome; hee

1 Cor. 15 *ult.*
2 Cor. 9. 6
Mat. 5. 10, 11, 12
God will reward his Servants, *Secundum laborem*, according to their labour, though not *Secundum proventum*, according to the ſucceſſe of their labour.

hee gave him alſo a chain of Gold as heavy as the chain of Iron that was upon him in priſon; And will not Chriſt richly reward all his ſuffering Saints? Surely hee will, Chriſt will at laſt pay a Chriſtian for every prayer hee hath made, for every Sermon hee hath heard, for every tear hee hath ſhed, for every morſell hee hath given, for every burden hee hath born, for every battel hee hath fought, for every enemy hee hath ſlain, and for every temptation that he hath overcome. *Cyrus* in a great expedition againſt his enemies, the better to incourage his ſouldiers to fight, in an oration that he made at the head of his Army, promiſed upon the victory, to make every foot ſouldier an horſman and every horſeman a Commander, and that no Officer that did valiantly, ſhould be unrewarded, but what are *Cyrus* his rewards, to the rewards that Chriſt our General promiſes to his

Mat. 19. 28
Luke 22. 30.
Mat. 5. 12

his, *Rev.*3.21. *To him that overcommeth, will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my father in his throne.* As there is no Lord to Christ, so there is no rewards to Christs, his rewards are the greatest rewards, hee gives Kingdomes, Crowns, Thrones, hee gives grace and glory, *Psal.* 84. 11. It is said of *Araunah* that noble *Jebusite*, renowned for his bounty, that he had but a subjects purse, but a Kings heart, but Jesus Christ hath a Kings purse, as well as a Kings heart, and accordingly hee gives.

As the King in *Plutarch* said of a groat, it is no kingly gift, and of a Talent, it is no base bribe.

And as Christs rewards are the greatest rewards, so his rewards are the surest rewards; he is faithfull that hath promised, 1 *Thes.* 5. 24. *Antiochus* promised often, but seldome gave (upon which hee was called in way of derision a great promiser) but Jesus Christ never made any promise, but hee hath or will per-

perform it, 2 *Cor.* 1. 20. nay he is often better than his word, 1 *Cor.* 2. 9. hee gives many times more than wee ask. The ſick man of the Palſy asked but health, and Chriſt gave him health and a pardon to boot. *Solomon* deſired but wiſdome, and the Lord gave him wiſdome, and honour, and riches, and the favour of creatures, as paper and pack-thred into the bargain. *Jacob* asked him but cloaths to wear, and bread to eat, and the Lord gave him theſe things, and riches, and other mercies into the bargain. Chriſt doth not meaſure his gifts by our Petitions, but by his own riches, and mercies. Gracious ſouls many times receive many gifts, and favours from God, that they never dreamt off, nor durſt preſume to begge, which others exſtreamly ſtrive after, and go without. *Archelaus* being much importuned by a covetous courtier for a cup of gold, wherein hee

Mat. 9. 2

2 Chron. 1. 10. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.

Gen. 28. 20. Compared with Gen. 32. 10.

hee drank, gave it unto *Euripides* that ſtood by, ſaying, thou art worthy to ask, and be denyed, but *Euripides* is worthy of gifts, although hee ask not. The Prodigall craves no more but the place of an hyred Servant, but hee is entertained as a Sonne, he is clad with the beſt robe, and fed with the fatted calf, he hath a ring for his hand, and ſhooes for his feet, rich ſupplies more than hee deſired. *Jacobs* ſons in a time of famine deſired only corn, and they return with corn and money in their ſacks, and with good news too, *Joſeph* is alive, and governour of all *Egypt*.

Luk. 15. 19. 25.

Gen. 42.

And as his Rewards are greater and ſurer than others rewards, ſo they are more durable and laſting than others rewards, the Kingdome that hee gives is a Kingdome that ſhakes not, the treaſures that he gives are treaſures that corrupt not, and the glory that hee gives

Heb. 12. 28
Mat. 6. 19, 20
1 Pet. 1. 4

is

is glory that fadeth not away, but the rewards that men give, are like themſelves, fickle and unconſtant, they are withering and fading. *Xerxes* crowned his ſteers-man in the morning, and beheaded him in the evening of the ſame day. And *Andronicus* the Greek Emperor, crowned his admiral in the morning, and then took off his head in the afternoon; *Roſenſis* had a Cardinals hat ſent him, but his head was cut off before it came to him; moſt may ſay of their Crowns, as that King ſaid of his, O Crown, more noble than happy. It was a juſt complaint which long ago was made againſt the Heathen gods (*O faciles dare ſumma deos eadem q; tueri difficiles!*) they could give their favourits great gifts, but they could not maintain them in the poſſeſſion of them, the World may give you great things, but the World cannot maintain you in the poſſeſſion

of

of them, but the great things, the great rewards that Christ gives his, hee will for ever maintain them in the possession of them, otherwise heaven would not bee heaven, Glory would not bee glory: Now by all these things you see, that it is a very great honour to bee an Old Disciple, an old Christian; and this honour you will never attain to, except you beginne to bee really good betimes, except in the morning of your youth, you return to the Lord, and get an interest in him.

I shall now come to make some Use and Application of this weighty truth to our selves.

You see beloved, that it is the great Duty and concernment of Young men, *To be really good betimes*: if this be so. Then

Use 1.

First, This truth looks sowerly and sadly upon such Young men, that are only seem-

seemingly good, that makes some shews of goodnesse, but are not right towards God at the root. As *Joash* when hee was young, hee seemed to have good things in him towards the Lord, whilst good *Jehoiada* liv'd, but when *Jehoiada* was dead, *Joash* his goodness was buried with him. Ah how many in these dayes that have been seemingly good, have turned to bee naught, very naught, yea stark naught! It is said of *Tiberius*, that whilst *Augustus* ruled, hee was no wayes tainted in his reputation; and that whilst *Drusus* and *Germanicus* were alive, hee feigned those vertues which hee had not, to maintain a good opinion of himself, in the hearts of the people; but after hee had got himself out of the reach of contradiction and controulment, there was no fact in which hee was not faulty, no crime to which hee was not accessary. Oh that this were not applicable to many young persons

2 Chron. 24. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 13, 14, 15, 16.

Neroes first five years are famous, but afterwards who more cruel.

There are some that write that after Demas had forsaken Paul, hee became a Priest in an Idol Temple.

ſons in theſe dayes, who have made great ſhews, and taken upon them a great name, who have begun to outſhine the ſtars, but are now gone out like ſo many ſnuffs, to the diſhonour of God, the reproach of the Goſpel, the grief of others, and the hazzard of their own ſouls.

It was a cuſtome of old, when any was baptized, the Miniſter delivered a white garment to bee put on, ſaying, take thou this white veſtment, and ſee thou bring it forth without ſpot at the Judgement ſeat of Jeſus Chriſt; whereupon one *Maritta* baptizing one *Elpidophorus*, who when hee was grown up, proved a prophane wretch, hee brings forth the white garment, and holding it up, ſhakes it againſt him, ſaying, this linnen garment *Elpidophorus* ſhall accuſe thee at the comming of Chriſt, which I have kept by mee as a witneſſe of thy Apoſtacy.

Crabs that go backward are reckoned among the unclean creatures. Levit.

All young men and women,

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Crabs that go backward are reckoned among the unclean creatures. Levit. 11. 10.

Ah young men and women,

your former professions will bee a sad witnesse against you in the great day of our Lord Jesus, except you repent and return in good earnest to the Lord. Oh it had been better that you had never made profession, that you had never set your faces towards Heaven, that you had never pretended to God and Christ, that you had never known the way of Righteousnesse, than after you have known it, to turn from the holy commandement. *Cyprian* in his Sermon *de lapsis* reporteth of divers, who forsaking the Faith, were given over to evil spirits, and dyed fearfully. Oh the deluſions, and the Christ-dethroning, conſcience-waſting and ſoul-undoing opinions, and principles that many young ones (who once were hopeful ones) are given up to? That dreadful Scripture ſeems to bee made good in power upon them? *All you that forſake the Lord ſhall come to bee aſhamed: and they that depart from him*

Pro. 14. 14.

2 Pet. 2. 21.

Jer. 17. 13.

him shall bee written upon the dust; to begin well, and not to proceed, is but to aspire to a higher pitch, that the fall may bee the more desperate. Backsliding is a wounding sin. You read of no armes for the back, though you do for the breast: Hee that is but seemingly good, will prove at last exceeding bad, 2 *Tim.* 3, 13. *they wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.*

Hos. 14. 4.

Eph. 6. 11.--18

The Wolf, though hee often dissembles, and closely hides his nature, yet hee will one time or other shew himself to bee a Wolf.

In the dayes of *Hadrian* the Emperour, there was one *Bencosseby*, who gathering a multitude of Jews together, called himself *Ben-cocuba*, the son of a star, applying that prophesie to himself, *Num.* 23. 17. but his mask was taken off, his Hypocrisy discovered, and he found to bee *Barchosaba*, the son of a lye; this age hath afforded many such monsters, but their folly is discovered,

Comets make a greater blaze than fixed stars.

your former profeſſions will bee a ſad witneſſe againſt you in the great day of our Lord Jeſus, except you repent and return in good earneſt to the Lord. Oh it had been better that you had never made profeſſion, that you had never ſet your faces towards Heaven, that you had never pretended to God and Chriſt, that you had never known the way of Righteouſneſſe, than after you haye known it, to turn from the holy commandement. *Cyprian* in his Sermon *de lapſis* reporteth of divers, who forſaking the Faith, were given over to evil ſpirits, and dyed fearfully. Oh the deluſions, and the Chriſt-dethroning, conſcience-waſting and ſoul-undoing opinions, and principles that many young ones (who once were hopeful ones) are given up to! That dreadful Scripture ſeems to bee made good in power upon them: *All you that forſake the Lord ſhall come to bee aſhamed; and they that depart from him*

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and their practises ahborred. This was the young mans commendation in the text, *That there was found in him some real good towards the Lord.*

Use 2.

2 This truth looks sowerly and sadly upon such young men, who are so far from having good things in them towards the Lord, that they give themselves up to those youthful lusts and vanities that are dishonouring, provoking, and displeasing to the Lord, who roar and revel, and gad and game, and dice, and drink, and drab, and what not these make work with a witness for repentance, or [illegible] the Physician of souls. I shall but touch upon the evils of youth, and then come to that which is mostly intended.

Ps. 3. 6. 1 The first evil that most properly attends youth, is pride, pride of heart, pride of apparrel, pride of parts; young men are apt to be proud of health, strength, friends,

friends, relations, wit, wealth, wiſdome: two things are very rare, the one is to ſee a young man humble, and watchful, and the other is to ſee an old man contented, and chearful. *Bernard* ſaith, that pride is the rich mans couzen, and experience every day ſpeaks out pride to bee the young mans couzen. God (ſaith one) had three ſons, *Lucifer*, *Adam*, and *Chriſt*; the firſt aſpired to bee like God in power, and was therefore thrown down from Heaven; the ſecond to bee like him in knowledge, and was therefore deſervedly driven out of *Eden*, when young; the third did altogether imitate and follow him in his goodneſſe, mercy, and humility, and by ſo doing, obtained an everlaſting inheritance.

Pride cannot climbe ſo high, but Juſtice will ſit above.

Remember this young men, and as you would get a paradiſe, and keep a paradiſe, get humble, and keep humble. Pride is an evil that puts men upon all manner of evil

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pride cannot climbe so high, but Justice will sit above.

Remember this young men, as you would get a paradise, and keep a paradise, get humble, and keep humble. Pride is an evil that puts men upon all manner of

vil. *Accius* the Poet, though hee were a dwarf, yet would bee pictured tall of ſtature. *Pſaphon* a proud Sybian, would needs bee a God, and having caught ſome birds, hee taught them to ſpeak and prattle, The great god *Pſaphon*. *Menecrates* a proud Phyſitian, wrote thus to King *Philip*, *Menecrates* a god, to *Philip* a King. Proud *Simon* in *Lucian*, having got a little wealth, changed his name (from *Simon* to *Simonides*) for that there were ſo many beggers of his kinne, and ſet the houſe on fire wherein hee was born, becauſe no body ſhould point at it. What ſad evils *Pharaohs* pride, and *Hamans* pride, and *Herods* pride and *Belſhuzzars* pride put them upon, I ſhall not now mention. Ah young men, young men! had others a window to look into your breaſts, or did your hearts ſtand where your faces do, you would even bee affraid of your ſelves, you would loathe and abhor your

ſelves.

ſelves. Ah! young men, young men, as you would have God to keep houſe with you, as you would have his minde and ſecrets made known to you, as you would have Chriſt to delight in you, and the ſpirit to dwell in you, as you would bee honoured among Saints, and attended, and guarded by Angels, get humble, and keep humble. *Tertullians* Councell to the young Gallants of thoſe times, was excellent; cloath your ſelves (ſaid hee) with the ſilk of piety, with the ſattin of ſanctity, and with the purple of modeſty. So ſhall you have God himſelf to bee your Sutor.

Tert. de Cult. fem. Cap. 13.

The ſecond evil that Youth is ſubject to, is, ſenſual pleaſures and delights, *Rejoyce, O young man in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the ſight of thine eyes.* The wiſe man by an Ironical conceſſion bids him rejoyce &c. Sin, &c. thou

Eccl. 11, 9. 2 Sam. 13. 23. --- 29. ἡδονὴ δέλεαρ κακοῦ. Pleaſure the bait of ſin. Plato.

thou art wilful, and resolved upon taking thy pleasure, go on, take thy course, this hee speaks by way of mockage, and bitter scoffe, &c. but know thou that for all these things, God will bring thee into judgement. So *Sampson* made a feast; for so used the Young men to do, the hearts of young men usually are much given up to pleasure. I have read of a young man who was very much given up to pleasures, hee standing by St. *Ambrose*, and seeing his excellent death, turned to other young men by him, and said, Oh! that I might live with you, and dye with him. Sensual pleasures are like to those Locusts, the crowns upon whose heads, are said to bee onely as it were such, or such in appearance, and like Gold, but *vers.* 10 it is said, there were (not as it were, but) stings in their tails. Sensual pleasures are but seeming, and appearing pleasures, but the pains that

Judg. 14. 10

Rev. 9. 7

They were much out that held pleasure to bee mans *summum bonum*.

that attend them are true and reall; he that delights in ſenſuall pleaſures, ſhall finde his greateſt pleaſures, become his bittereſt pains. The Heathens look't upon the back parts of pleaſure, and ſaw it going away from them, and leaving a ſting behind. Pleaſures paſſe away as ſoon as they have wearied out the bodie, and leave it as a bunch of grapes, whoſe juice hath been preſſed out; which made one to ſay, (*Nulla major voluptas, quam voluptatis faſtidium*) I ſee no greater pleaſure in this world, than the contempt of pleaſure. *Julian* though an Apoſtate, yet profeſſed, that the pleaſures of the body were far below a great ſpirit. And *Tully* ſaith, he is not worthy of the name of man (*qui unum diem velit eſſe in voluptate,*) that would entirely ſpend one whole day in pleaſures; it is better not to deſire pleaſures than to enjoy them. I ſaid of laughter it is mad, and of mirth what

Eccl. 2. 2.

doſt

doſt thou? The interrogation bids a challenge to all the maſters of mirth, to produce any one ſatisfactory fruit which it affordeth, if they could. *Xerxes* being weary of all pleaſures, promiſed rewards to the inventers of new pleaſures, which being invented, hee nevertheleſs remained unſatisfied. As a Bee flyeth from flower to flower, and is not ſatisfied, and as a ſick man removes from one bed to another, from one ſeat to another, from one chamber to another, for eaſe, and findes none. So men given up to ſenſual pleaſures, go from one pleaſure to another, but can find no content, no ſatisfaction in their pleaſures. *The eye is not ſatisfied with ſeeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.* There is a curſe of unſatisfiableneſs lies upon the creature, honours cannot ſatisfy the ambitious man, nor riches the covetous man; nor pleaſures the voluptuous man; man cannot take off the wearineſs of one plea-

Eccl. 1. 8

pleaſure by another, for after a few evaporated minutes are ſpent in pleaſures, the body preſently fails the minde, and the minde the deſire, and the deſire the ſatisfaction, and all the man. Pleaſures are *Junos* in the purſuit, and but clouds in the enjoyment; Pleaſure is a beautifull Harlot, ſitting in her chariot, whoſe four wheeles are Pride, Gluttony, luſt, and idleneſs; the two horſes are proſperity and abundance, the two drivers are Idleneſs and Security, her attendants and followers are guilt, grief, late repentance, (if any) and oft death and ruine; many great men, and many ſtrong men, and many rich men, and many hopefull men, and many young men, have come to their ends by her; but never any enjoyed full ſatisfaction and content in her.

Becauſe ſaith, that the fruit of the tree of knowledge is ſweet, but in the end it breeds choler, ſo do worldly pleaſures.

Ah! Young men, Young men, avoid this harlot, and come not neer the door of her houſe.

And

And as for lawful pleaſures let me onely ſay this, tis your Wiſdome onely to touch them, to taſte them, and to uſe them as *Mithridates* uſed poyſon, to fortify your ſelves againſt caſuall extremities and maladies: when Mr. *Roger Aſcham* asked the Lady *Jane Grey*, how ſhee could looſe ſuch paſtime, her father with the Dutcheſs being a hunting in the Park; Smilingly anſwered, all the ſport in the Park is but a ſhaddow of that pleaſure I finde in this book, having a good book in her hand. *Auguſtin* before his converſion could not tell how to live without thoſe pleaſures which he delighted much in, but when his nature was changed, and his heart graciouſly turned to the Lord, O how ſweet (ſaith hee) is it to bee without thoſe former ſweet delights.

Ah! Young men, when once you come to experience the goodneſſe and ſweetneſs that is in the Lord, and in his word, and

ways,

wayes, you will then ſit down, and grieve that you have ſpent more Wine in the Cup, than Oil in the Lamp. There are no pleaſures ſo delighting, ſo ſatisfying, ſo raviſhing, ſo engaging, and ſo abiding, as thoſe that ſprings from union, and communion with God, as thoſe that flows from a ſenſe of intereſt in God, and from an humble and a holy walking with God.

The third ſin of youth is raſhneſſe, they many times know little, and fear leſſe, and ſo are apt raſhly to run on, and run out often to their hurt, but more often to their hazzard. *Exhort young men to be ſober-minded, or diſcreet.* Ariſtot. Polit. Tit. 2. 6. They are apt to bee raſh, to bee hot ſpurs. As you may ſee in *Rehoboams* young Counſellers, who counſelled him to tell the people (that groaned under their burthens) that his little finger ſhould bee thicker than his Fathers loins, and that hee would adde to their yoak; and that whereas his Father 1 King. 12. 8, 9, 10, 11.

ther had chaſtized them with whips, hee would chaſtize them with Scorpions; (this raſh counſel proved *Rehoboams* ruine; yea *David* himſelf, though a good man, yet being in his warm blood, and young, how ſadly was hee overtaken with raſhneſs. *As the Lord God of* Iſrael *liveth*, (ſaith hee) *except thou hadſt haſtened, and come to meet mee, ſurely there had not been left unto* Nabal, *by to morrow light, any that piſſeth againſt the wall.* And this hee bindes with an oath; becauſe the Maſter was fooliſhly wilful, the innocent ſervants muſt all bee woful. And becauſe *Nabal* had been niggardly of his bread, *David* would bee prodigal of his blood. Ah how unlike a Chriſtian! yea how below a man doth *David* carry it, when his blood is up, and hee a captive to raſhneſs, and paſſion. Raſhneſſe will admit of naught for reaſon, but what unreaſonable ſelf ſhall dictate for reaſon; as ſloath ſeldome

1 Sam. 25. 34, 35.

Deus proximus ille eſt, quem ratio, non ira movet: Sen. Hee is next to God, whom reaſon not anger moveth.

dome bringeth actions to good birth, ſo raſhneſſe makes them alwayes abortive, ere well formed. A raſh ſpirit is an ungodlike ſpirit; a raſh ſpirit is a weak ſpirit, it is an effeminate ſpirit. *A man of underſtanding is of an excellent ſpirit*, or as the Hebrew will bear, is of a cool ſpirit, not raſh and hot, ready at every turn to put out his ſoul in wrath. Raſhneſſe unmans a man, it will put a man upon things below man-hood. *Heroſtratus* (a hot ſpur) an obſcure baſe fellow did in one night by fire deſtroy the Temple of *Diana* at *Epheſus*, which was two hundred and twenty years in building of all *Aſia*, at the coſt of ſo many Princes, and beautified with the labours and cunning of ſo many excellent workmen; the truth is, there would bee no end ſhould I diſcover the many ſad and great evils that are uſhered into the world by that one evil, Raſhneſſe, which uſually attends

Prov. 17. 27.

youth,

youth, &c. and therefore young men decline it, and arm your ſelves againſt it, &c.

The fourth ſin that ordinarily attends on youth, is mocking, and ſcoffing at Religious men, and Religious things, they were young ones that ſcoffingly and ſcornfully ſaid to the Prophet, *Go up thou bald-head, go up thou bald-head.* And the young men derided and mocked *Job. But now they that are younger than I, have mee in deriſion, whoſe Fathers I would have diſdained, to have ſet with the dogs of my flock. Upon my right hand riſe the youth, they puſh away my feet, and they raiſe up againſt mee the wayes of their deſtruction, &c.* And Oh that this age! did not afford many ſuch Monſters, who are notable, who are infamous in this black Art of ſcoffing and deriding the people of God, and the wayes of God. The Athenians once ſcoffed at *Sylla's* wife, and it had well nigh coſt the razing of their City, hee was

2 King. 2. 23, 24.
Job 30. 1. 12, 13, 14, 15.

was so provoked with the indignitie, and will you think it safe to scoff at the people of God, who are the Spouse of Christ, who are as the apple of his eye, who are the signet on his right hand, his portion, his pleasant portion, his inheritance, his Jewels, his royal Diadem? Ah young men, young men, will you seriously consider how sadly, and sorely hee hath punished other scoffers and mockers? and by his Judgements on them, be warned never to scoff at the people of God, or his wayes more. *Julian* the Emperor was a great scoffer of Christians, but at last hee was struck with an arrow from Heaven, that made him cry out (*vicisti Galilee*) thou Galilean (meaning our Saviour Christ) hast overcome mee. *Felix* for one malicious scoff, did nothing day and night but vomit blood, till his unhappy soul was separated from his wretched body. *Pherecydes* was consumed by Worms alive, for giving

Rev. 21. --
Zach. 2. 5.
Deut. 32. 9.
Isa. 19. 25.
Joel. 2. 17.
Psal. 33. 12.
Isa. 62. 3.

Religion but a nickname. *Lucian* for barking against Religion like a dog, was by the just Judgments of God devoured of dogs. Remember these dreadful judgements of God on scoffers, and if you like them, then mock on, scoff on, but know, that justice will at last bee even with you, nay above you.

The fifth and last evil (that I shall mention) that attends and waits on youth, is lustfulnesse, wantonnesse, which occasioned aged *Paul* to caution his young *Timothy*, to flee youthful lusts. *Timothy* was a chaste, and chastened peece; hee was much sanctified and mortified, his graces were high, and corruptions low, hee walked up and down this world, with dying thoughts, and with a weak distempered, declining, dying body; his heart was in Heaven; and his foot in the grave, and yet youth, is such a slippery age, that *Paul* commands him to flye, to post from youthful lusts; 2 Tim. 2. 22.

though

though *Timothy* was a good man, a weak sickly man, a marvellous temperate man, drinking Water rather than Wine, yet hee was but a man, yea a young man; and therefore *Pauls* counsel and command is, that he flees youthful lusts. And *Solomon*, who had sadly experienced the slipperinesse of youth, gives this counsel. *Put away the evils of thy flesh, for childhood and youth are vanity.* Eccles. 11. 10

He was a young man that followed the Harlot to her house; hee was young in years, and young in knowledge (*Salazer* upon the words saith, that was a happy age that afforded but one simple young man among many, whereas late times afford greater store. Prov. 7. 7,8,9, 10, 11, &c.

Ah! too many of the youths of this age, in stead of flying from youthful lusts, they post and pursue after youthful lusts. *Chrysostome* speaking of youth, saith, it is (*difficilem, facilabilem, fallibilem, vehementissimisq; egentem frænis*) hard to bee ruled, easy to Chrysost. Homil. 1. *Ad populum.*

bee drawn away, apt to bee deceived, and ſtanding in need of very violent reines.

Lapide. The Ancients did picture youth like a young man naked, with a vail over his face, his right hand bound behinde him, his left hand looſe, and Time behinde him pulling one thread out of his vail every day, intimating that young men are void of knowledge, and blinde, unfit to do good, ready to do evil, till Time by little and little make them wiſer. Well young man, remember this, that the leaſt ſparklings and kindlings of luſts, will firſt or laſt coſt thee groans and griefs, tears and terrors enough. Theſe five are the ſins that uſually are waiting and attending on youth, but from theſe the young man in the text, was by grace preſerved, and ſecured, which is more than I dare affirm of all, into whoſe hands this treatiſe ſhall fall. But though theſe five are the ſins of youth, yet they are not all the ſins

of

of youth, for youth is capable of, and subject to all other sins whatsoever, but these are the special sins that most usually waits and attends on young men, when they are in the spring, and morning of their youth.

Other sins attends youth as 1 Ignorance. 1 Cor. 14 20. 2 Falshood, Psal. 58. 3. 3 Excessive love of liberty. 4 Impatience of councils and reproofs. Jer. 31. 18, 19. 5 Impudency. Isa. 3. 5. 6 A trifling spirit. Eccles. 11. 10. 7 Prodigality.

I shall now hasten to the main use that I intend to stand upon, and that is an use of Exhortation to all young persons.

Use.

Ah sirs! as you tender the glory of God, the good of your bodies, the joy of your Christian friends, and the salvation of your own souls; bee exhorted and perswaded to bee really good betimes. It was the praise and honour of *Abijah*, that there was found in him some good thing towards the Lord in the Primrose of his child-hood. Oh that it might bee your honour and happinesse! to bee really good betimes; that it might bee to you a praise, and a name, that in the morning of your youth you have begun to seek the Lord,

and to know and love the Lord, and to get an interest and propriety in the Lord; now that this Exhortation may stick and take;

I beseech you seriously to weigh and ponder these following motives, or considerations.

1. Motive. First, consider, *It is an honour to bee good betimes.* A young Saint is like the morning star; hee is like a pearl in a gold Ring. It is mentioned as a singular honour to the beleeving Jews, that they first trusted in Christ, that wee should bee to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ; this was their praise, their crown, that they were first converted and turned to Christ, and Christianity. So *Paul* mentioning *Andronicus* and *Junia*, doth not omit this circumstance of praise and honour, that they were in Christ before him. Salute *Andronicus* and *Junia* my kinsmen, and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the Apostles, who also

Ephes. 1. 12.

Rom. 16. 7.

also were in Christ before me.

And so it was the honor of the house of *Stephanas*, that they were the first fruits of *Achaia*, it was their glory that they were the first that received and welcomed the Gospell in *Achaia*. 1 Cor. 16. 15.

Tis a greater honor for a young man to out-wrastle sinne, Satan, temptation, the world, and lusts, than ever *Alexander* the Great could attain unto. It was *Judah* his praise and honor, that they were first in fetching home *David* their King. 2 Sam. 19. 15.

Ah! Young men and women, it will bee your eternal praise and honor, if you shall before others, if you shall bee the first among many, who shall know the Lord, and seek the Lord, who shall receive the Lord, and imbrace him, who shall cleave to the Lord, and serve him, who shall honor the Lord, and obey him, who shall delight in the Lord, and walk with him. The *Romans* built Vertues and Ho-

nours Temple close together, to shew, that the way to honor was by vertue, and indeed there is no crown to that which goodness sets upon a mans head, all other honour is fading and withering.

Judg. 1.7 *Adonibezeck* a mighty Prince, is suddenly made fellow-commoner

Dan. 4. 28 with the Dogs. And *Nebuchadnezzar* a mighty conqueror turned a grazing among the oxen

Act. 12. 23 And *Herod* reduced from a conceited God, to bee the most loathsome of men, living carrion, arrested by the vilest of creatures, upon the suit of his affronted Creatour.

Est 7. 10. And *Haman* feasted with the King one day, and made a feast for Crows the next. I might tell you of *Bajazet*, and *Belisarius*, two of the greatest Commanders in the world, and many others, who have suddenly fallen from the top of worldly honor and felicity, into the greatest contempt and misery, but I shall not at this time: But that honour that arises from mens being

ing gracious betimes, is such honour that the world can neither give nor take, it is honour, it is a Crown that will still bee green, and flourishing, it is honour that will bed and board with a man, that will abide with a man under all tryals and changes, that will to the grave, that will to heaven with a man.

Ah Sirs! It is no small honour to you, who are in the spring and morning of your days, that the Lord hath left upon record several instances of his Love and delight in young men; hee chose *David* a younger brother, and passes by his elder brothers; hee frowns upon *Esau*, and passes by his door, and sets his love and delight upon *Jacob* the younger brother; he kindly and lovingly accepts of *Abels* person and sacrifice, and rejects both *Cains* person and sacrifice, though hee was the elder brother. Among all the Disciples, *John* was the youngest and the most and best be-

1 Sam. 16. 11, 12, 13

Rom. 9. 12, 13

Gen. 4. 3, 4, 5.

John 13. 23

beloved. There was but one young man that came to Christ, and hee came not aright, and all the good that was in him, was but some moral good, and yet Christ loved him, with a love of pitty and compassion, the Greek word signifies to speak friendly, and deal gently with one; and so did Christ with him, all which should exceedingly encourage young men to be good betimes, to be gracious in the morning of their youth, no way to true honour like this, but

Mar. 10. 19, 20, 21.

ἀγαπᾶν

Secondly, Consider Christ loved poor Sinners, and gave himself for them when hee was in the prime of his age (being supposed to bee about thirty and three) and will you put him off with the worst of your time?

The sacrifices in the Law were young Lambs, and young Kids, to shew that Christ our sacrifice should dye and suffer for our sins in the flower of his age.

Ah! Young men, young men, Christ gave himself up to death, hee made himself an offering for your sins, for your sakes, when he was in the prime and flower of his age, and why

then

then should you put off Christ to old age? Did he dye for Sin in the prime of his age? and will not you dye to sinne in the prime of your age? Did he offer himself for you in the spring and morning of his years? and will not you offer up your selves to him in the spring and morning of your years? O give not Christ cause to say, I dyed for you betimes! but you have not lived to mee betimes, I was early in my suffering for you, but you have not been early in your returning to mee, I made haste to compleat your redemption, but you have made no haste to make sure your vocation, and election: I stayed not, I lingered not, but soon suffered what I was to suffer, and quickly did what was to be done for your eternal welfare, but you have stayed and lingered (like *Lot* in *Sodom*) and have not done what you might have done in order to your everlasting good; in the Prime-rose of my days I swear for

Rom. 13. 11, 12.

2 Pet. 1. 10

Gen. 19. 16

for you, I wept for you, I bled for you, I hung on the croſs for you, I bore the wrath of my father for you; but you have not in the Primroſe of your days ſweat under the ſenſe of divine diſpleaſure; nor wept over your ſins, nor mourned over mee whom you have ſo often grieved and pierced; I could not be quiet nor ſatisfied till I had put you into a capacity, into a poſſibility of Salvation, and yet you are well enough quieted and ſatisfied, though you do not know whether ever you ſhall bee ſaved.

Zach. 12. 10

Ah Sirs! how ſad would it be with you, if Jeſus Chriſt ſhould ſecretly thus expoſtulate with your conſciences in this your day.

Oh! how terrible would it bee with you, if Chriſt ſhould thus viſibly plead againſt you in his great day. Ah! Young men, young men and women, who, but ſouls much left of God, blinded by Satan, and hardned in

2 Cor. 4. 3, 4

Sin

ſin, can hear Jeſus Chriſt ſpeaking thus to them? I ſuffered for Sinners betimes, I laid down a ranſome for ſouls betimes, I pacified my fathers wrath betimes, I ſatisfied my fathers juſtice betimes, I merited grace and mercy for Sinners betimes, I brought in an everlaſting righteouſneſs upon the world betimes, &c. I ſay who can hear Jeſus Chriſt ſpeaking thus, and his heart not fall in love and league with Chriſt, and his ſoul not unite to Chriſt, and reſign to Chriſt, and cleave to Chriſt, and for ever be one with Chriſt, except it be ſuch that are for ever left by Chriſt? Well, remember this (*Quanto pro nobis vilior, tanto nobis charior*) the more vild Chriſt made himſelf for us, the more dear he ought to be unto us.

Ah! Young men, remember this, when Chriſt was young hee was tempted and tryed, when he was in the morning of his dayes, his wounds were deep, his burden weighty,

Nolo vivere sine vulnere, cum te video vulneratum. Bonaventur Oh my God, as long as I see thy wounds, I will never live without wound

weighty, his cup bitter, his sweat painful, his agony and torment, above conception, beyond expression; when he was young, that blessed head of his was crowned with thornes, and those eyes of his that were purer than the Sunne, were put out by the darknes of death, and those ears of his which now hears nothing but *Hallelujahs* of Saints and Angels, were filled with the blasphemies of the multitude, and that blessed beautiful face of his which was fairer than the sons of men, was spit on by beastly filthy wretches, and that gracious mouth and tongue that spake as never man spake, was slandered and accused of blasphemy, and those hands of his which healed the sick, which gave out pardons, which swayed a Scepter in heaven, and another on earth, were nailed to the Cross, and those feet that were beautiful upon the mountains, that brought the glad tidings of peace and salva-

Aut Deus naturæ patitur, aut mundi machina dissolvitur, said Dionysius Alexandrinus. Either the God of nature, suffered, or the frame of the world will be dissolved.

tion

tion into the World, and that were like unto fine brass, were also nailed to the cross; All these great and sad things did Jesus Christ suffer for you in the prime and flower of his days, and Oh! what an unspeakable provocation should this be to all young ones, to give up themselves betimes to Christ, to serve, love, honour, and obey him betimes, even in the spring and morning of their youth?

Let the thoughts of a crucified Christ (saith one) be never out of your mind, let them be meat and drink unto you, let them be your sweetness and consolation, your honey, and your desire, your reading and your meditation, your life, death, and resurrection.

The third motive or consideration to provoke you to begin to be good betimes, is this, *viz.* that it is the best and choicest way in the world, to be rich in gracious experiences betimes, (which

The Philosopher once said (*solus sapiens dives*) onely the wise man, is the rich man

(which are the beſt riches in all the world) as hee that ſets up for himſelf betimes, is in the moſt hopeful way to bee rich betimes: ſo he that is good in good earneſt betimes, hee is in the ready way, the high-way of being rich in grace, and rich in goodneſs, they uſually prove men of great obſervation, and great experience. God loves to ſhew theſe his beauty, and his glory in his ſanctuary. He delights to cauſe his glory and his goodneſs to paſs before ſuch; theſe ſhall finde all his paths drop marrow and fatneſs, for theſe the Lord of hoſts will make a feaſt of fat things, a feaſt of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined; theſe ſhall have all manner of pleaſant fruits laid up at their gates for their well beloved; none have ſo many choice pledges of Chriſts love, nor ſo many ſweet kiſſes of Chriſts mouth, nor ſo many imbraces in Chriſts arms, as thoſe ſouls that are good be-

Pſal. 63. 1, 2. Exod. 3. 3. 19. 22. &c. Pſal. 65. 11, 12

Iſa. 25, 6

Can. 7. 13

betimes; O the grace, the goodneſs, the ſweetneſs, the fatneſſe that Chriſt is ſtill a droping into their hearts; Chriſt will make their hearts his largeſt treaſury, hee'l lay up moſt of his heavenly treaſure in their ſouls; there he will ſtore up mercies new and old; there hee will treaſure up all plenty, rariety, and variety; there he will lay up all that heart can wiſh, or need require. O the many drops of myrrhe that falls from Chriſts fingers upon their hearts! O the many ſecrets that Chriſt reveals in their ears! O the many love letters that Chriſt ſends to theſe! O the many viſits that hee gives to theſe! O the turns, the walks that hee hath in Paradiſe with theſe! there are none in the World for experience, and intelligence to theſe. Ah! Young men, young men, as you would be rich in the beſt riches, beginne to be good betimes, as there is no riches to ſpiritual riches, ſo there is no

Earthly Riches are full of Poverty. *Divitiæ corporales paupertatis plenæ ſunt.*

If there were any happineſs in riches, the Gods would not want them ſaith *Seneca*.

way to be rich in theſe riches, but by beginning to be good (in good earneſt) betimes.

As for worldly riches, Philoſophers have contemn'd them, and prefer'd a contemplative life above them; and ſhall not Chriſtians much more, the Prophet calls them thick clay, which will ſooner break the back than lighten the heart, they cannot better the ſoul, they cannot enrich the ſoul. Ah! how many thredbare ſouls are to be found under ſilken cloaks and gowns, how often are worldly riches like hang-men, they hide mens faces with a covering, that they may not ſee their own end, and then they hang them. And if they do not hang you, they will ſhortly leave you, they make themſelves wings and fly away; when one was a commending the riches and wealth of Merchants, I do not love that wealth ſaid a Heathen that hangs upon ropes, if they break, the ſhip miſcarrieth, and

and all is loſt. He is rich enough (ſaith *Jerom*) that lacketh not bread, and high enough in dignity that is not forced to ſerve.

This worlds wealth that men ſo much (deſire,
May well be likened to a burning fire,
Whereof a little can do little harm,
But profit much our bodies wel to warm
But take too much and ſurely thou (ſhalt burn,
So too much wealth, to too much (woe do's turn.

It was an excellent ſaying of *Lewis* of *Bauyer*, Emperour of *Germany* (*hujuſmodi comparanda ſunt opes quæ cum naufragio ſimul eximant*) ſuch goods are worth getting and owning, as will not ſink or waſh away if a ſhipwrack happen, but will wade and ſwim out with us, we ſee ſuch are the ſpiritual riches that will attend thoſe who in the ſpring and morning of their youth, ſhall know the Lord, and ſerve the Lord, and get an intereſt in the Lord, and thus much for the third motive.

The fourth motive to provoke young ones to be really good betimes, is, to consider that the present time, the present day is the onely season that you are sure of, time past cannot be recalled, and time to come cannot be ascertained. To day if you hear his voice harden not your hearts. Behold now is the acceptable time, now is the day of Salvation; some there bee that trifle away their time, and fool away their souls and their salvation; to prevent this, the Apostle beats upon the τὸ νῦν, the present opportunity, because if that be once past, there is no recovering of it; therefore as the Marriner takes the first fair wind to sail; and as the Merchant takes his first opportunity of buying and selling, and as the Husbandman takes the first opportunity of sowing and reaping, So, should young men take the present season; the present day (which is their day) to be good towards the

Heb. 3. 15

2 Cor. 6. 2

The whole Earth hangs on a point, so doth heaven and eternity on an inch of opportunity.

the Lord, to seek him, and serve him, and not to post off the present season, for they know not what another day, another hour, another moment may bring forth: that door of grace that is open to day, may be shut to morrow; that golden Scepter of mercy that is held forth in the Gospel this day, may be taken in the next day; that love that this hour is upon the bare knee, intreating and beseeching young men to break off their Sinnes by repentance, to return to the Lord, Isa. 27. 4, 5
to lay hold on his strength, and be at peace with him, may the next hour be turned into wrath. Ah! the noble motions that have been lost, the good purposes that have withered, the immortal souls that have miscarried, by putting off the present season, the present day. *Paul* discoursing before *Felix* of righteousnesse, temperance and judgment to come, and in this discourse striking at two special vi- Act. 24. 25

ces that *Felix* was particularly guilty of, he falls a trembling, and being upon the wrack to hear such doctrin, he bids *Paul* depart for that time, and he would call for him at a convenient season, here *Felix* neglects his present season, and we never read that ever after this, he found a convenient time or season to hear *Paul* make an end of the subject he had begun; So Christ made a very fair offer to the Young man in the Gospell, *Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven*, here Christ offers heavenly treasures for earthly treasures; unmixt treasures for mixt treasures; perfect treasures for imperfect treasures; satisfying treasures for unsatisfying treasures; lasting treasures for fading treasures; but the young man slips his opportunity, his season, and goes away sorrowfull; and we never read more of him.

Mat. 21, 22, 23, 24

Ah! Young men, young men, do

do not put off the present season, do not neglect the present day, there is no time yours, but the present time; no day yours but the present day: and therefore do not please your selves, and feed your selves with hopes of time to come, and that you will repent but not yet; and lay hold on mercy, but not yet; and give up your selves to the Lord next week, next month, or next year; for that God that hath promised you mercy, and favour, upon the day of your return, he hath not promised to prolong your lives till that day comes, when a Souldier was brought before *Lamachus* a Commander, for a mis-behaviour, and pleaded he would do so no more, *Lamachus* answered (*non licet in bello bis peccare*) no man must offend twice in War; So God (especially in these Gospel days, wherein the motions of Divine justice are more smart and quick, than in former days) happily will not

Often consider what the damned would give (were it in their hands) for one season of grace, for one opportunity of mercy.

Heb. 3. 2.

ſuffer men twice to neglect the day of grace, and let ſlip the ſeaſons of mercy.

Ah young men! young men, you ſay you will bee good towards the Lord before you die, but if you are not good towards the Lord to day, you may dye to morrow; nay juſtice may leave him to bee his own executioner to morrow, who will not repent, nor ſeek the Lord to day. *Otho* the Emperor ſlew himſelf with his own hands, but ſlept ſo ſoundly the night before, that the grooms of his Chamber heard him ſnort.

Plutarch reporteth the like of Cato.

Young men, I will ſuppoſe you to be good accountants; now if you pleaſe to count the number, and mark the age of the Sacrifices in the old Teſtament, you ſhall finde more Kids and Lambs offered than Goats, and old Sheep; You have no leaſe of your lives, you are not ſure that you ſhall live to *Iſaacks* age, to

Gen. 27. 1.

live till your eyes wax dim; you are

are not ſure that you ſhall live to *Jacobs* years, and die, leaning upon the top of a ſtaff. You read of them who die in their youth, and whoſe lives are among the unclean. Slip not the preſent ſeaſon, neglect not this day of grace; let not Satan keep your ſouls and Chriſt any longer aſunder, by telling of you, that you are too young; that hereafter will bee time enough. *Auſtin* tells us, that by this very temptation the Devil kept him off from receiving of Chriſt, from cloſing with Chriſt Seven years together: hee could no ſooner think of inquiring after Chriſt, of getting an intereſt in Chriſt, of leaving off his ſinful courſes, &c. but Satan would bee ſtill a ſuggeſting, thou art too young to leave thy drunkenneſs, thou art too young to leave thy Dalilahs, to leave thy Harlots; till at laſt hee cryed out, how long ſhall I ſay it is too ſoon? why may I not repent to day? and lay hold on

Heb. 11. 21.

Job 36. 14.

As out of the boughs of a tree are taken wedges to cleave it in peeces; ſo out of our own luſts Satan works Engines to deſtroy us.

on Jesus Christ to day? &c. Ah young men! this is your day, this is your season, if you will not now hearken and obey, you may perish for ever. *Cæsar* had a letter given him by *Artemidorus*, that morning, hee went to the Senate, wherein notice was given him of all the conspiracy of his murtherers; so that with ease, hee might have prevented his death; but neglecting the reading of it, was slain; hee slipt his season, and dyes for it. Ah! how many for sliping gracious seasons and opportunities have died for ever? Soul-opportunities are more worth than a thousand worlds; mercy is in them, grace and glory is in them, heaven and eternity is in them.

Fifthly, To provoke you to bee good betimes, consider, how just it is with God to reserve the dregs of his wrath for them, who reserve the dregs of their dayes for him: how can a husband embrace that wife in her old age, who

who hath ſpent all the time of her youth, in following after ſtrangers? Will any man receive ſuch into his ſervice, who hath all their dayes ſerved his enemies? and received ſuch wounds, blows, and bruſes, that renders them unfit for his ſervice?

Ah young men! young men, *do not thus fooliſhly and unwiſely requite the Lord*, for all his patient waiting, his gracious wooing, and his merciful dealing with you. Ah! do not put off God to old age, for old, lame, and ſick Sacrifices rarely reach as high as Heaven. Is not old age very unteachable; in old age are not men very unapt to take in, and as unapt to give out? In old age (oftentimes) men are men, and no men, they have eyes, but ſee not, ears, but hear not, tongues, but ſpeak not, feet, but walk not. An aged man is but a moving Anatomy, or a living Mortuary; now how unlovely, how uncomely, how unworthy, nay, how incenſing, how

Deut. 32. 6.

Multa ſenem circumveniunt incommoda. Horatius. Many are the inconveniences that do encompaſs an old man.

how provoking a thing must this needs bee, when men will dally with God, and put him off till their doting dayes have overtaken them; till their spring is past, their Summer overpast, and they arrived at the fall of the leaf, yea till winter colours have stained their heads with gray and hoary hairs. How provoking this is, you may see in those sad words of *Jeremiah*, Jer. 22. 21, 22. *I spake unto thee in thy prosperity, but thou saidst, I will not hear; this hath been thy manner from thy youth, that thou obeyest not my voice*: But will God put up this at their hands? no, therefore it follows in the next verse, *Surely thou shalt bee ashamed and confounded for all thy wickedness*.

The reproach of the evil of wickedness is not to bee added to old age (*Solet enim senectus esse deformis, infirma, oblivios a, edentula, iracunda, indocilis, & molesta*) saith Plutarch, in Apothegm. Rom. For old age useth to be deformed, weak, forgetful, toothlesse, covetous, unteachable, unquiet.

Oh that young men would let this Scripture lye warm every morning upon their hearts, that so they may not dare to put off God, and provoke him to their own confusion; though you are young,

young and in your ſtrength, yet, are you ſtronger than God; can you make your party good with him? if you will needs bee a provoking, provoke them that are your matches, and do not contend with him that is mightier than you, that can command you into nothing, or into Hell at pleaſure.

Sixthly, conſider, that the ſooner you are good on earth, the greater will bee your reward in Heaven; the ſooner you are gracious, the more at laſt you will bee glorious; you read in the Scripture of a reward, of a great reward, and of a full reward; now *thoſe that are good betimes*, that know, ſeek, ſerve, and love the Lord in the ſpring, and morning of their youth, they are in the faireſt way of gaining the greateſt, and the fulleſt reward.

Pſal. 58. 11.
Gen. 15. 1.
Pſal. 19. 11.
Matth. 5. 12.
Heb. 10. 35.
John 2. 8.

And this I ſhall make clear by that which follows.

Firſt, The ſooner any man begins to bee really good, the more

more good hee will do in this world. Now the more good any man doth on earth, the more glory hee ſhall have in Heaven. Therefore my beloved Brethren,

1 Cor. 15. 58. *bee yee ſtedfaſt, unmoveable, alwaies abounding in the work of the Lord, foraſmuch as you know, that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.* Mans wages, mans reward ſhall bee according to his works; hee that doth moſt work here, ſhall have moſt reward hereafter. God will at laſt proportion the one to the other, the reward to

2 Cor. 9. 6. the work. *Hee which ſoweth ſparingly, ſhall reap ſparingly, and hee which ſoweth bountifully, ſhall reap bountifully.* Though no man ſhall bee rewarded for his works; yet God will at laſt meaſure out happineſſe, and bleſſedneſſe to his

Rom. 2. 5,6,7. people, according to their ſervice, faithfulneſſe, diligence, and work in this world. Grace is glory in the bud, and glory is grace at the full; glory is nothing elſe but a bright conſtellation of graces,

happi-

happineſſe, nothing but the quinteſſence of holineſſe. Grace and glory differ (*non ſpecie, ſed gradu*) in degree, not kind, as the learned ſpeak. Grace and glory differ very little, the one is the ſeed, the other is the flower; grace is glory militant, and glory is grace triumphant; and a man may as well plead for equal degrees of grace in this world, as hee may plead for equal degrees of glory in the other world. Surely the more grace here, the more glory hereafter; and the more work Chriſtians do on earth, the more glory they ſhall have in Heaven; and the ſooner men begin to bee good, the more good they will do in this world, and the more they do here, the more they ſhall have hereafter. Philoſophers ſeem to weigh our vertues with our vices, and according to the preponderation of either, denominate us good, or bad, and ſo deliver us up to reward or puniſhment.

No

No man can commend good works magnificently enough, (ſaith *Luther*) for one work of a Chriſtian is more precious than Heaven and Earth, and therefore all the world cannot ſufficiently reward one good work. And in another place ſaith the ſame Author, If I might have my deſire, I would rather chuſe the meaneſt work of a Country Chriſtian (or poor maid) than all the victories and triumphs of *Alexander* the great, and of *Julius Caſar*.

And again, whatſoever the Saints do, though never ſo ſmall and mean, it is great and glorious, becauſe they do all in faith, and by the word, ſaith the ſame Author. To prevent miſtakes you muſt remember that the works that Jeſus Chriſt will reward at laſt, are ſupernatural works; they are 1 Works of God, 2 Wrought from God, 3 For God, 4 In God, 5 According to God; they are works that flow from ſupernatural principles; and they

they are directed to supernatural ends, and performed in a supernatural way; now the sooner a man begins to bee good, the more hee will abound in these good works, and the more doubtless any man abounds in such good works on earth; the greater reward hee shall have in heaven; yet it must not bee forgotten, that the best actions, the best works of Hypocrites, and all men out of Christ, are but (*splendida peccata*) fair and shining sins, beautiful abominations. And as the *Phenix* in *Arabia* gathers sweet odoriferous sticks together, and then blows them with her wings, and burns her self with them; so many a carnal professor, burns himself with his own good works, that is, by his expecting and trusting to receive that by his works, that is only to bee received and expected from Jesus Christ. Though all that man can do towards the meriting of Heaven, is no more than the lifting up

David made use of his bow, but did not trust to his bow. The Dove made use of her wings, but did not trust in her wings, but in the Ark.

of a ſtraw towards the meriting of a Kingdome; yet ſuch a proud peece man is, that hee is ready enough to ſay with proud *Vega* (*Cœlum gratis non accipiam*) I will not have Heaven of free coſt. A proud heart would fain have that of debt, which is meerly of grace, and deſires that to bee of purchaſe, which God hath intended to bee of free mercy; which made one to ſay, that hee would ſwim through a Sea of Brimſtone, that hee might come to Heaven at laſt; but hee that ſwims not thither through the Sea of Chriſts blood, ſhall never come there; man muſt ſwim thither, not through brimſtone, but through blood, or hee miſcarries for ever.

Merces non eſt debita, ſed gratuita.

2 Again, the ſooner a man begins to bee good, the more ſerviceable hee will bee to others, and the more hee will provoke others to good; now all the good that you provoke others to, by counſel, or carriage, ſhall bee

put

put down to your account (as all the sins that men provoke others to, is put down to their accounts: *David* did but send a Letter concerning the death of *Uriah*, and the charge commeth, *thou hast slain* Uriah *with the Sword*) the more I stir up others to sow, the more at last I shall reap; the sooner a man beginnes to bee good, the more good hee will do, the more serviceable he will bee in the Town or City where hee dwells, in the family where he lives, among his relations (wife, children, kindred, servants, &c.) with whom hee converses.

2 Sam. 12.8.9
Isa. 38.3
Neh. 13.14.

The sooner a man beginnes to be gracious, the sooner and the more useful will his arts, his parts, his gifts, his graces, his mercies, his experiences, his life, his labours, his prayers, his counsels, his examples, be, to all that are with him, to all that are about him.

Synesius speaks of some who having a treasure of rare abilities in them, would as soon part with their hearts as their conceptions, but such are rather monsters than men.

Lilmod Lelammed, we therefore

learn that we may teach, is a Proverb among the *Rabbins*. And I do therefore lay in, and lay up (ſaith the Heathen) that I may draw forth again, and lay out for the good of many.

Ah! Young men, Young men, as you would be uſeful and ſerviceable to many, begin to be good betimes, and to lay in, and lay up, and lay out betimes, for the profit and advantage of others. *Auguſtin* accounted nothing his own, that he did not communicate to others. The Bee doth ſtore her hive out of all ſorts of Flowers, for the common benefit. Tis a baſe and unworthy ſpirit, for a man to make himſelf the centre of all his actions; The very Heathen man could ſay, that a mans Countrey, and his friends, and others, challenge a great part of him; And indeed the beſt way to do our ſelves good, is to be a doing good to others, the beſt way to gather, is to ſcatter. Memorable

morable is the ſtory of *Pyrhias* a Merchant of *Ithaca*, who at Sea eſpying an aged man, a Captive in a Pyrates ſhip, took compaſſion of him, and redeemed him, and bought his Commodities which the Pyrate had taken from him, which were certain barrels of pitch; The old man perceiving, that not for any good ſervice hee could do him, nor for the gain of that commodity, but meerly out of charity and pitty he had done this, diſcovered a great maſs of treaſure hidden in the pitch; whereby the Merchant in a very ſhort time became very rich, at which very time God made that word good, *Hee that ſoweth liberally; ſhall reap liberally*, and that word, *The liberal ſoul ſhall bee made fat*, and that word, *The liberal deviſeth liberal things, and by liberal things ſhall he ſtand.* It is fabled of *Midas*, that what ever he touched he turned it into Gold, it is certain that a liberal hand, a libe-

2 Cor. 9. 6

Prov. 11. 25

Iſa. 32. 8

ral heart turns all into gold, into gain, as Scripture and experience do abundantly evidence: now if you put all these things together, nothing is more evident, than that those that begin to be good betimes, are in the ready way, the high way to be high in heaven, when they shall cease from breathing on earth; and therefore young men as you would bee high in heaven, as you would have a great reward, a full reward, a massie weighty Crown, O labour to be good betimes! labour to get acquaintance with the Lord, and an interest in the Lord, in the spring and morning of your days.

The seventh Motive or consideration to provoke and incite you to bee good betimes, is, to consider that the Lord is very much affected, and taken with your seeking of him, and following after him in the spring and morning of your Youth. Go, and cry in the ears of *Jerusalem*, saying,

ing, *I remember thee, the kindneſs of thy Youth, the love of thine eſpouſals, when thou wenteſt after mee in the wilderneſſe, in a land that was not ſown.* Jer. 2. 2

Ah! how kindly, how ſweetly did the Lord take this at their hands, that they followed him in their youth, while their bones were full of marrow, while they were ſtrong and fit for ſervice, while nature was freſh, lively and vigorous: In the Law God called for the firſt of all things; hee required not only the firſt fruits, but the very firſt of the firſt; The firſt of the firſt-fruits of thy land, *thou ſhalt bring into the houſe of the Lord thy God.* God is the firſt being, the firſt good, and therefore deſerves the firſt of the firſt; and the beſt of the beſt; the firſt and the beſt is not too good for him, who is goodneſs it ſelf, God in that of *Leviticus* 2, 14, is ſo paſſionately ſet upon having the firſt of the firſt, that he will not ſtay till the Exod. 23. 19

Tis truely ſaid of God that he is *Omnia ſui ipſius omnia.*

green ears of Corn be ripe, but will have the green ears of corn dryed in the fire, leaſt he ſhould looſe his longing.

As many young women, and ſickly children cannot ſtay till the fruit be ripe, but muſt have it while it is green, even ſo ſaith God, my heart, my deſires, are ſo vehemently ſet upon the firſt fruits, the firſt things, that I cannot ſtay, I cannot ſatisfie my ſelf without them, and what would God teach us by all this, but to ſerve him with the firſt-fruits of our age, the prim-roſe of our child-hood, the morning of our youth. God hath given you of the beſt, do not put him off with the worſt, with the worſt of your time, the worſt of your days, the worſt of your ſtrength, leaſt he ſwear in his wrath, that you ſhall never enter into his reſt.

The eighth Motive or Conſideration to provoke you to bee good betimes, to ſeek and ſerve the

the Lord in the morning of your youth, is, to conſider that this may bee a ſpecial means to prevent many black temptations, and an encouragement to withſtand all temptations that you may meet with from a tempting Devil, and a tempting World; an early turning to the Lord will prevent many temptations to deſpair, many temptations to neglect the means openly, to deſpiſe the means ſecretly: many temptations about the being of God, the goodneſſe, faithfulneſſe, truth, and juſtice of God; temptations to deſpair, temptations to lay violent hands on a mans ſelf; temptations to queſtion all that God hath ſaid, and that Chriſt hath ſuffered, ariſes many times from mens delaying and putting off of God to the laſt, all which, with many others; are prevented by a mans ſeeking and ſerving of the Lord in the ſpring and morning of his youth. It is reported of the Harts of *Scythia*,

Early Converts will never have cauſe to ſay, as that deſpairing Pope ſaid, the Croſs could do him no good, becauſe he had ſo often ſold it away.

thia, that they teach their young ones to leap from bank to bank, from rock to rock, from one turfe to another (by leaping before them) by which means when they are hunted, no beast of prey can ever take them; so when persons exercise themselves in godlines, when they are young, when they leap from one measure of holines to another, when they are in the morning of their days, Satan that mighty hunter after fouls, may pursue them with his temptations, but hee shall not overtake them, he shall not prevail over them. As you see in *Moses*, *Joseph*, *Daniel*, and the three children, these knew the Lord, and gave up themselves to the Lord in the prime, and Prime-rose of their Youth, and these were all temptation-proof; Satan and the World pursued them, but could not overtake them, when the Devill and the World had done their worst, the young mens bows abode.

Heb. 11
Gen. 39
Dan. 31. ult.

abode in ſtrength, and their hands (to reſiſt) were made ſtrong by the hands of the mighty God of *Jacob*, Ego *non ſum ego*, ſaid that young convert when tempted, I am not the man that I was. Gen. 49. 23, 24

Luther tells of a young Virgin that uſed to reſiſt all temptations with this, *Chriſtianus ſum*, I am a Chriſtian. Early Converts may ſay when tempted, as hee, tell mee not Satan what I have been, but what I am and will bee; or as hee in the like caſe, whatſoever I was, I am now in Chriſt, a new creature, and that is it which troubleth thee; or, as hee, the more deſperate my diſeaſe was, the more I admire the Phyſitian. Yea thou mayeſt yet ſtrain it a peg higher, and ſay the greater my ſins were, the greater is my honor. As the Devils which once *Mary Magdalen* had, are mentioned for her glory: when *Pyrrhus* tempted *Fabritius* the firſt day with an Elephant, ſo huge and monſtrous

Bernard.
Beza.

Auguſtin. Such as thou art now, I was once, but ſuch as I am now, thou wilt never be, ſaid *Diogenes* to a baſe fellow that told him, hee had once been a forger of money.

strous a beast as before hee had not seen, the next day with money and promises of honour; hee answered, I fear not thy force, I am too wise for thy fraud.

Ah! Young men, Young men, as you would be free from the saddest and darkest temptations, and as you would be armed against all temptations, O labour as for life, to be good betimes, seek and serve the Lord in the morning of your Youth, no way like this for the preventing earthquakes, heart-quakes, stormy days, and winter nights, &c.

The ninth Motive or Consideration to stir up young men to be good betimes, to seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of their youth, is, to consider the worth and excellency of souls.

Luk. 23. 43
Mat. 10. 28
Act. 7. ult.

A soul is a spiritual immortal substance, it is capable of the knowledge of God, it is capable of union with God, of communion

nion with God, and of a bleſſed and happy fruition of God. Phil. 1. 23

Chriſt left his fathers boſome for the good of ſouls; he aſſumed mans nature for the ſalvation of mans ſoul; Chriſt prayed for ſouls, he ſweat for ſouls, he wept for ſouls, hee bled for ſouls, he hung on the Croſs for ſouls, he trode the Wine-Preſs of his fathers wrath for ſouls, he dyed for ſouls, hee roſe again from death for ſouls, he aſcended for ſouls, he intercedes for ſouls, and all the glorious preparations that he hath been a making in heaven this ſixteen hundred years, is for ſouls. Heb. 2. 13, 14, 15, 16 Iſa. 63. 3, 4 Ioh. 14. 1, 2, 3

Ah! young men, young men, do not play the Courtier with your precious ſouls, the Courtier doth all things late, hee riſes late, dines late, ſups late, goes to bed late, repents late.

Ah Sirs! the good of your ſouls is before all, and above all other things in the World, to be firſt

O anima Dei in signita imagine, desponsata fide, donata spiritu, &c.

first regarded and provided for? and that partly because, it is the best and more noble part of man, and partly because therein mostly, and properly is the Image of God stampt, and partly because it is the first converted, and partly because it shall be the first, and most glorified.

1 Tim. 5. 8

Ah! Young men, Young men, if they bee worse than Infidels, that make not provision for their families, what monsters are they, that make not provision for their own souls? this will bee bitterness in the end.

Cæsar Borgias being sick to death, lamentingly said, when I lived I provided for every thing but death, now I must dye, and am unprovided to dye, this was a dart at his heart, and it will at last be a dagger at yours, who feast your bodies, but starve your souls; who make liberal provision for your ignoble part, but no provision for your more noble part,

part; If they deserve a hanging, who feast their slaves, and starve their Wives; that make provision for their enemies, but none for their friends; how will you escape hanging in hell, who make provision for every thing, yea for your very lusts, but make no provision for your immortal souls? Wee hate the *Turks* for selling Christians for Slaves, and what shall we think then of those who sell themselves, their precious souls for toyes and trifles that cannot profit, who practically say, what once a prophane Noble man of *Naples* verbally said, *viz.* that hee had two souls in his body, one for God, and another for whosoever would buy it.

James 4.2,3
Hos.7.13,14

Gallenuceus relates this story.

Ah young men, young men! do not pawn your souls, do not sell your souls, do not exchange away your souls, do not trifle and fool away your precious souls, they are Jewels more worth than a thousand worlds, yea than

Heaven

Heaven and earth; if they are ſafe, all is ſafe; but if they are loſt, all is loſt; God, loſt, and Chriſt loſt, and the ſociety of glorious Angels and bleſſed Saints loſt, and Heaven loſt, and that for ever. *Grandenſis* tells of a woman that was ſo affected with ſouls miſcarryings, that ſhee beſought God to ſtop up the paſſage into Hell with her ſoul and body, that none might have entrance.

Ah! that all young perſons were ſo affected with the worth and excellency of their ſouls, and ſo allarmed with the hazzard and danger of looſing their ſouls, as that they may in the ſpring and morning of their dayes, enquire after the Lord, and ſeek him, and ſerve him with all their might, that ſo their precious and immortal ſouls may bee ſafe and happy for ever; but if all this will not do, then in the laſt place

Tenthly, Conſider, young men, that God will at laſt bring you to a reckoning, hee will at laſt

laſt bring you to judgement. *Rejoyce, O young man in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the dayes of thy youth, and walk in the wayes of thine heart, and in the ſight of thine eyes; but know thou, that for all theſe things, God will bring thee unto judgement.* In theſe words you have two things, 1 An ironical conceſſion, hee bids him rejoyce, &c. hee yeelds him what hee would have by an irony, by way of mockage, and bitter ſcoff. Now thou art young, and ſtrong, lively, and luſty, and thy bones are full of marrow; thou art reſolved to bee proud. and ſcornful, to indulge the fleſh, and to follow thy delights, and pleaſure; well take thy courſe if thou dareſt, or if thou haſt a minde to it, if thy heart bee ſo ſet upon it. *Rejoyce in thy youth, &c.* The ſecond is a comminarion, or a ſad and ſevere præmonition. But know thou, that for all theſe things, God will bring thee into judgement; will bring thee,

Eccleſ. 11.9.

Hierom ſtill thought that that noiſe was in his ears (*ſurgite mortui, & venite ad judicium*) ariſe you dead, and come to judgement.

these words import two things, first, the unwillingnesse of youth to come to judgement; secondly, the unavoidablenes that youth must come to judgement, but how soon you shall bee brought to judgement, is only known to God.

Augustine confesses in one of his books, that as long as his conscience was gnawed with the guilt of some youthful lust, hee was once insnared with, the very hearing of a day of judgement, was even a Hell to him.

Histories tell us of a young man, who being for some capital offence condemned to dye, grew gray in one nights space, and was therefore pitied, and spared.

Ah young men! young men, that the serious thoughts of this great day, might put you upon breaking off the sins of your youth, and the dedicating of your selves to the knowledge, love, and service of the Lord, in the

the spring and flower of your dayes. Ah young men, consider the errours of your lives, the wickednesse of your hearts, the sinfulnesse of your wayes, and that strickt account that ere long you must bee brought to before the Judge of all the World.

The Heathens themselves had some kinde of dread, and expectation of such a day; and therefore when *Paul* spake of judgement to come, *Felix* trembled, though a Heathen. The bringing into judgement is a thing which is known by reason, and is clear by the light of nature, wherefore in *Austria* one of the Nobles dying, who had lived fourscore and thirteen years, and had spent all his life in pleasures and delights, never being troubled with any infirmity, and this being told to *Frederick* the Emperour, from hence saith hee, wee may conclude the souls immortality; for if there bee a God

Act. 24. 25. The Philosophers had some dreames of a severe day of accounts; as appeareth by Plato's Gorgi, as many passages in Tully, &c.

that ruleth this world (as Divines and Philosophers do teach) and that hee is just, no one denyeth, surely there are other places to which souls after death do go, and do receive for their deeds, either reward, or punishment, for here wee see, that neither rewards are given to the good, nor punishments to the evil.

Eneas Sylvius.

2 Cor. 5. 9, 10, 11. Ah young men! knowing therefore the terrour of the Lord, and the terrour of this day, Oh that you would bee perswaded to flee from the wrath to come, to cast away the Idols of your souls, to repent and bee converted in the Prim-rose of your youth, that your sins may bee blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, or else woe, woe to you that ever you were born. I have read a story of one, who being risen from the dead, and being asked in what condition hee was, hee made answer, no man doth beleeve, no man doth beleeve,

Act. 3. 19.

beleeve, no man doth beleeve. And being further asked what he meant by that repetition, hee answered, no man doth beleeve how exactly God examineth, how strictly God judgeth, how severely hee punisheth. Oh that the waies of most young persons did not declare to all the world that they do not, and that they will not beleeve the dead, and terrour of that day that will admit of no plea, nor place for Apology, or appeal; the highest and last Tribunal can never bee appealed from, or repealed.

Now if for all that hath been said, you are resolved to spend the flower of your daies, and the prime of your strength, in the service of sin and the world, then know, that no tongue can express, no heart can conceive that trouble of mind, that terrour of soul, that horror of conscience, that fear and amazement, that weeping and wailing, that crying and roaring, that sighing and groaning,

The Turks have a tradition, and fran-tick opinion, that wicked men shall at the great day carry their sins in a satchel after their Captain Caine, but well would it bee for them, if this should bee all their punishment in that great day.

that cursing and banning, that stamping and tearing, that wringing of hands, and gnashing of teeth, that shall certainly attend you, when God shall bring you into judgement for all your loosnesse, and lightnesse, for all your wickednesse, and wantonnesse, for all your prophanenes, and basenesse, for all your neglect of God; your grieving the comforter, your trampling under foot the blood of a Saviour, for your dispising of the means, for your prizing Earth above Heaven, and the pleasures of this world, above the pleasures that bee at Gods right hand.

Oh how will you wish in that day when your sins shall bee charged on you, when justice shall bee armed against you, when conscience shall bee gnawing within you, when the world shall bee a flaming fire about you, when the gates of Heaven shall bee shut against you, and the flame of Hell ready to take hold of you, when

Angels

Chrysostome speaking of this day, saith, for Christ at this day to say, depart from me, is a thing more terrible than a thousand hells. Chrysost. Hom. 88. ad Pop. Antioch.

Angels and Saints ſhall ſit in judgement upon you, and for ever turn their faces from you, when evil ſpirits ſhall be terrifying of you, and Jeſus Chriſt for ever diſowning of you, how will you (I ſay) wiſh in that day that you had never been born, or that you might now bee unborn, or that your mothers wombs had proved your Tombs? O how will you then wiſh to bee turned into a bird, a beaſt, a ſtock, a ſtone, a Toad, a Tree! O that our immortal ſouls were mortal, O that wee were nothing, O that we were any thing but what we are.

Joan Damaſc. et Author. Anonym. de quat. Noviſs. Impreſſ. Daven. Anno. 1494.

I have read a remarkable ſtory of a King, that was heavy and ſad, and wept, which when his brother ſaw, hee asked him why hee was ſo penſive? becauſe (ſaith hee) I have judged others, and now I muſt bee judged my ſelf; And why (ſaith his brother) do you ſo take on for this, it will (hapily) bee a long time

ere that day come, and beſides that, it is but a ſlight matter. The King ſaid little to it for the preſent. Now it was a cuſtome in that Countrey when any had committed Treaſon, there was a Trumpet ſounded at his door in the night time, and hee was next day brought out to bee executed, now the King commanded a Trumpet to bee ſounded at his brothers door in the night time, who awakening out of his Sleep, when hee heard it, aroſe, and came quaking and trembling to the King; How now ſaith the King, whats the matter you are ſo affrighted, I am ſaith hee attached of Treaſon, and next morning I ſhall bee executed, why ſaith the King to him again, are you ſo troubled at that, knowing that you ſhall bee judged by your Brother, and for a matter that your Conſcience tells you, you are clear off, How much more therefore may I bee afraid, ſeeing that

that God shall judge mee, and not in a matter that my conscience frees mee off, but of that whereof I am guilty; and beside this, if the worst come, is but a temporary death you shall dy; but I am liable to death eternal both of body and soul. I will leave the Application to those young persons, that put this day afar off, and whom no arguments will move to bee good betimes, and to acquaint themselves with the Lord in the morning of their youth.

But now to those young men and women who beginne to seek, serve, and love the Lord in the Primerose of their days, the day of judgement will be to them (*melodia in aure, jubilum in corde*) like musick in the ear and a jubilee in the heart, this day will be to them, a day of refreshing, a day of redemption, a day of vindication, a day of coronation, a day of Consolation, a day of Salvation, it will bee to them a marriage day, a harvest day,

Act. 3.19,20, 21,22. Mic. 7.7,8,9, 10,11. Rev. 19.6,7,8, 9,10. Mat. 25.34 to v. 41.

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a pay day, now the Lord will pay them for all the Prayers they have made, for all the Sermons they have heard, for all the teats they have shed, in this great day Christ will remember all the individual offices of love and friendship shewed to any of his, now hee will mention many things for their honor and comfort that they never minded, now the least and lowest acts of love and pity towards his, shall bee interpreted as a special kindnesse shewed to himself. Now the Crown shall bee set upon their heads, and the Royall Robe put upon their backs, now all the World shall see that they have not served the Lord for naught: Now Christ will pass over all their weaknesses, and make honorable mention of all the services they have performed, of all the mercyes they have improved, and of all the great things that for his name and glory, they have suffered,

2 Tim. 4. 8
Mal. 3. 17, 18

Quest.

Quæſt. But here an apt queſtion may be moved. *viz.* Whether at this great day, the ſinnes of the Saints ſhall bee brought into the judgement of Diſcuſſion and diſcovery or no, whether the Lord will in this day publikely manifeſt, proclaim, and make mention of the ſins of his people, or no?

I humbly judge according to my preſent light, that he will not; and my reaſons for it are theſe, *viz.*

The firſt is drawn from Chriſts judicial proceedings in the laſt day, ſet down largely and clearly in the 25 of *Matthew*, where hee inumerateth only the good works they had done, but takes no notice of the ſpots and blots, of the ſtaines and blemiſhes, of the infirmities, and innormities, of the weakneſſes and wickedneſſes of his people. My

Second Reaſon is taken from Chriſts vehement proteſtations that they ſhall not come into judgement

Vide Aquin. 87. Suppl. Eſt. in l. 4. Sendiſt. 47.

judgement, *John* 5. 24. *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, he that heareth my Word, and beleeveth on him that ſent mee, hath everlaſting life, and ſhall not come into condemnation: but is paſſed from death unto life.* Thoſe words ſhall not come into condemnation, are not rightly tranſlated, the Original is εἰς κρίσιν ſhall not come into judgement, not into damnation, as you read it in all your Engliſh books, I will not ſay what ſhould put men upon this expoſition rather than a true Tranſlation of the Original words: further, it is very obſervable, that no Evangeliſt uſeth this double aſſeveration but *John*, and hee never uſeth it but in matters of greateſt weight and importance, and to ſhew the earneſtneſs of his ſpirit, and to ſtirre us up to better attention, and to put the thing aſſerted out of all queſtion, and beyond all contradiction; as when wee would put a thing for ever out of all queſtion, wee do

John 1. 51. ch. 3. 3. 11. ch. 6. 26. 32. 47. 53. &c.

it

it by a double aſſeveration, verily verily, tis ſo, &c.

Thirdly, Becauſe his not bringing their ſinnes into judgement, doth moſt and beſt agree with many precious and glorious expreſſions that wee finde ſcattered (as ſo many ſhining ſparkling Pearls) up and down in Scripture, as

Firſt, With thoſe of Gods blotting out the ſinnes of his People, I even I am hee that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions for my own ſake, and will not remember thy ſinnes. *I have blotted out as a thick cloud, thy tranſgreſſions, and as a cloud thy ſins.* Who is this that blots out tranſgreſſions? hee that hath the keyes of heaven and hell, at his Girdle, that opens and no man ſhuts, that ſhuts and no man opens, he that hath the Power of life and death, of condemning and abſolving, of killing and of making alive, hee it is that blots out tranſgreſſions; if an under

Iſa. 43. 25

Iſa. 44. 22

der officer, should blot out an inditement, that perhaps might do a man no good, a man might for all that bee at last cast by the Judge; but when the Judge or King shall blot out the indictment with their own hand, then the indictment cannot return, now this is every beleevers case, and happiness.

Secondly, to those glorious expressions, of Gods not remembring of their sinnes any more, *Isa.* 43. 25. *And I will not remember thy sins; And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord, for they shall all know mee from the least of them, to the greatest of them, saith the Lord, for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sinne no more.* So the Apostle, *for I will bee merciful to their unrighteousnesse, and their sinnes, and their iniquities will I remember no more:* And again the same Apostle saith, *This is the covenant*

Jer. 31. 34

Heb. 8. 12

venant that I will make with them. after those days, saith the Lord, *I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them: and their sinnes and iniquities will I remember no more.* The meaning is, their iniquities shall quite bee forgotten, I will never mention them more, I will never take notice of them more, they shall never hear more of them from mee, though God hath an iron memory to remember the sinnes of the wicked, yet he hath no memory to remember the sins of the righteous.

Heb. 10. 17. That which Cicero said flatteringly of *Cæsar*, is truly affirmed of God. *Nihil obliviſci ſolet præter injurias*, he forgetteth nothing but the wrongs that daily are done him by his.

Thirdly, His not bringing their sinnes into judgement, doth most and best agree with those blessed expressions, of his casting their sinnes into the depth of the Sea, and of his casting them behind his back. *Hee will turne again, hee will have compassion upon us, hee will subdue our iniquities, and thou wilt cast all their sinnes into the depths of the Sea,*

Mich. 7. 19

where

where ſinne is once pardoned, the remiſſion ſtands never to be repeated, pardoned ſinnes ſhall never come in account againſt the pardoned man, before God any more, for ſo much doth this borrowed ſpeech import, if a thing were caſt into a River, it might bee brought up again, or if it were caſt upon the ſea, it might be diſcerned, and taken up again, but when it is caſt into the depths, the bottome of the Sea, it can never bee boyed up again.

By the Metaphor in the Text, the Lord would have us to know, that ſinnes pardoned ſhall riſe no more, they ſhall never be ſeen more, they ſhall never come on the account more, hee will ſo drown their ſinnes, that they ſhall never come up before him the ſecond time; And ſo much that other Scripture imports. *Behold for peace I had great bitterneſs, but thou haſt in love to my ſoul delivered it from the pit of corruption:*

Iſa. 38. 17

ruption; for thou haſt caſt all my ſins behinde thy back: theſe laſt words are a borrowed ſpeech taken from the manner of men, who are wont to caſt behinde their backs, ſuch things as they have no minde to ſee, regard, or remember. A gracious ſoul hath alwayes his ſins before his face (*I acknowledge my tranſgreſſions, and my ſin is ever before mee*;) and therefore no wonder if the Lord caſt them behinde his back. The Father ſoon forgets, and caſts behinde his back thoſe faults that the child remembers, and hath alwaies in his eyes; ſo doth the Father of ſpirits. Pſal. 51. 3.

Fourthly, His not bringing their ſins into judgement, doth beſt agree with that ſweet, and choice expreſſion of Gods pardoning the ſins of his people; *And I will cleanſe them from all their iniquity, whereby they have ſinned againſt mee; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have ſinned, and whereby they have tranſgreſſed againſt mee.* So *Micha.* Jer. 33. 8.

Who is a God like unto thee that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage (as though hee would not see it, but wink at it) *hee retaineth not his anger for ever, because hee delighteth in Mercy.* The Hebrew word (*Nose* from *Nasa*) that is here rendred pardoneth, signifies a taking away; when God pardons sin, hee takes it cleere away; that if it should bee sought for, yet it could not bee found, as the Prophet speaks, *In those daies, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of* Israel *shall bee sought for, and there shall bee none; and the sins of* Judah, *and they shall not bee found, for I will pardon them whom I reserve;* and those words, and *passeth by*, in the (aforecited) seventh of *Micha*, and the 18. according to the Hebrew (*Vegnober Gnal*) is, and *passeth over; God passeth over the transgression of his heritage*; that is, hee takes no notice of it, as a man in a deep muse, or as one that hath haste of businesse, seeth not

Mic. 7. 18.

Jer. 50. 20.

עָבַר.

Gnabar hee passed over.

not things before him, his mind being buried about other matters, hee neglects all to minde his businesse. As *David*, when hee saw in *Mephibosheth* the feature of his friend *Jonathan*, took no notice of his lamenesse, or any other defect, or deformity. So God beholding in his people the glorious image of his Son, winks at all their faults and deformities, which made *Luther* say, *do with mee what thou wilt, since thou hast pardoned my sin*; and what is it to pardon sin, but not to mention sin. Isa. 40. 1, 2.

Fifthly, in his not bringing their sins into the Judgement of discussion, and discovery, doth best agree to those expressions of forgiving, and covering. *Blessed is hee whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.* Psal. 32. 1. In the original it is in the plural. Blessednesses, loe, here is a plurality of blessings, a chain of pearls.

The like expression you have in the 85. *Psalm* and the 2. *vers.*

Sic velantur, ut in judicio non revelentur.

Thou haſt forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou haſt covered all their ſin. Selah. For the underſtanding of theſe Scriptures aright; take notice that to cover, is a Metaphorical expreſſion; covering is ſuch an action, which is oppoſed to diſcloſure; to bee covered, is to bee ſo hid and cloſed, as not to appear. Some make the Metaphor from filthy loathſome objects, which are covered from our eyes, as dead carkaſſes are buried under the ground; ſome from garments, that are put upon us to cover our nakedneſs, others from the Egyptians that were drowned in the red Sea, and ſo covered with water; others from a great gulf in the earth, that is filled up and covered with earth, injected into it: And others make it in the laſt place an alluſive expreſſion to the Mercy-ſeat, over which was a covering, now all theſe Metaphors in the general tend to ſhew this, that the Lord will not look, he will not ſee,

hee

hee will not take notice of the ſins hee hath pardoned, to call them any more to a judicial account.

As when a Prince reads over many treaſons, and rebellions, and meets with ſuch and ſuch which he hath pardoned, he reads on, he paſſeth by, hee takes no notice of them, the pardoned perſon ſhall never hear more of them, hee will never call him to account for thoſe ſins more. So here, &c. When *Cæſar* was painted, hee put his finger upon his ſcar, his wart. God puts his fingers upon all his peoples ſcars, and warts, upon all their weakneſſes, and infirmities that nothing can bee ſeen but what is fair and lovely; *Thou art all fair, my Love, and there is no ſpot in thee*, Can. 4. 7.

Sixthly, it beſt agrees to that expreſſion of not imputing of ſin. *Bleſſed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whoſe ſpirit there is no guile.* So the Apoſtle in that, *Rom.* 4. 6, 7, 8. now Pſal. 32. 2.

not to impute iniquity, is not to charge iniquity, not to set iniquity upon his score, who is blessed and pardoned, &c.

Seventhly and lastly, it best agrees with that expression that you have in the 103. *Psalm.* and the 11, and 12. *vers. For as the Heaven is high above the Earth, so great is his mercy towards them that fear him: As far as the East is from the West, so far hath hee removed our transgressions from us.* What a vast distance is there betwixt the East and the West? of all visible latitudes, this is the greatest; and thus much for the third Argument. The

Fourth Argument, that prevails with mee to judge that Jesus Christ will not bring the sins of the Saints into the judgement of discussion, and discovery in the great day, is, because it seems unsutable to three considerable things, for Jesus Christ to proclaim the infirmities, and miscarriages of his people to all the world.

First,

First, It seems to bee unsutable to the glory and solemnity of that day, which to the Saints will bee a day of refreshing, a day of restitution, a day of redemption, a day of coronation, as hath been already proved; now how sutable to this great day of solemnity, the proclamation of the Saints sins will be, I leave the Reader to judge.

Secondly, It seems unsutable to all those near and dear relations, that Jesus Christ stands in towards his, hee stands in the relation of a Father, a Brother, a head, a Husband, a Friend, an Advocate; now are not all those by the law of relations bound rather to hide and keep secret (at least from the world) the weaknesses and infirmities of their near and dear relations, and is not Christ? is not Christ much more? by how much hee is more a Father, a Brother, a Head, a Husband, &c. in a spiritual way than any others can bee in a natural way. &c.

Isa. 9 6.
Heb. 2. 11, 12
Ephes. 1. 21, 22.
Rev. 19. 7.
John 15. 1.
John 2. 1, 2.

Thirdly; It ſeems very unſuitable to what the Lord Jeſus requires of his in this world, the Lord requires that his people ſhould caſt a mantle of love, of wiſdome, of ſilence, and ſecreſie over one anothers weakneſſes and infirmities. Hatred ſtirreth up ſtrifes; but love covereth all ſins; loves mantle is very large; love will finde a hand, a plaiſter to clap upon every ſore. *Flavius Veſpaſianus* (the Emperour) was very ready to conceal his friends vices, and as ready to reveal their vertues: So is divine love in the hearts of the Saints.

Prov. 10. 12. 1 Pet. 4. 8.

Mat. 18. 15. *If thy Brother offend thee, go and tell him his fault between him and thee alone; if he ſhall hear thee, thou haſt gained thy Brother.* As the Pills of reprehenſion are to bee gilded and ſugred over with much gentleneſſe, and ſoftneſſe; ſo they are to bee given in ſecret, tell him between him and thee alone. Tale-bearers, and Tale-hearers are alike abominable,

Heaven is too hot, and too holy a place for them, *Pſal.* 15. 3. now will Jeſus Chriſt have us carry it thus towards offending Chriſtians, and will hee himſelf act otherwiſe? nay, is it an evil in us to lay open the weakneſſes and infirmities of the Saints to the world? and will it bee an excellency, a glory, a vertue in Chriſt, to do it in the great day? &c.

A fifth Argument is this, it is the glory of a man to paſſe over a tranſgreſſion. *The diſcretion of a man deferreth his anger, and it is his glory to paſſe over a tranſgreſſion;* or to paſſe by it, as wee do by perſons or things, wee know not, or would take no notice of. Now *is it the glory of a man to paſſe over a tranſgreſſion*, and will it not much more bee the glory of Chriſt, ſilently to paſſe over the tranſgreſſions of his people, in that great day? The greater the treaſons and rebellions are that a Prince paſſes over, and takes no notice of, the more is it his honour,

Prov. 19. 11.

Non amo quenquam niſi offendam, ſaid a Heathen.

honour, and glory; and so doubtlesse it will be Christs in that great day. To pass over all the treasons and rebellions of his people, to take no notice of them, to forget them, as well as forgive them.

The Heathens have long since observed, that in nothing man came nearer to the glory and perfection of God himself, than in goodness and clemency. Surely if it bee such an honour to man, *to passe over a transgression*, it cannot bee a dishonour to Christ, to pass over the transgressions of his people, hee having already buried them in the Sea of his blood. Again saith *Salomon*, *It is the glory of God to conceal a thing*. And why it should not make for the glory of divine love to conceal the sins of the Saints, in that great day, I know not: and whether the concealing the sins of the Saints in that great day, will not make most for their joy, and wicked mens sorrow, for their comfort,

Pro. 25. 2.

and

and wicked mens terrour and torment. I will leave you to judge, and time and experience to decide; And thus much for the resolution of that great question. Having done with the Motives that may incourage and provoke young men to bee good betimes, to know, love, seek, and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of their dayes.

I shall now come to those directions and helps, that must (by assistance from Heaven) bee put in practice, if ever you would bee good betimes, and serve the Lord in the Prim-rose of your dayes. Now all that I shall say, will fall under these two heads. First, Some things you must carefully and warily decline, and arm your selves against; and secondly, there are other things that you must prosecute and follow. First; there are some things that you must warily decline, and they are these,

First, If ever you would bee

good

good betimes, if you would bee gracious in the ſpring and morning of your youth, Oh then take
Amos 6. 3. heed of putting the day of death far from you. Young men are very prone to look upon death afar off, to put it at a great diſtance from them, they are apt to
Exod. 10. 28. ſay to death, as *Pharaoh* ſaid to *Moſes*, *Get thee from mee, and let mee ſee thy face no more*; if old men diſcourſe to them of death, they
Mat. 27. 4. are ready to anſwer as the High-Priest did *Judas* (in a different caſe) *what is that to us, look you unto it?* wee know ſickneſſe will come, and death is a debt that wee muſt all pay, but ſurely theſe
Pſal. 90. 10. gueſts are a great way from us, for doth not *David* ſay, *The daies of a man are threeſcore years and ten?* wee have calculated our nativities, and wee cannot abate a day, a minute, a moment of *threeſcore and ten*; and therefore it is even a death to us to think of death, there being ſo great a diſtance between our birth-day, and our dying-

dying-day, as wee have caſt up the account.

Ah young men! it is ſad, it is very ſad, when you are ſo wittily wicked, as to ſay with thoſe in *Ezekiel, Behold they of the houſe of* Iſrael *ſay, the viſion that hee ſeeth is for many dayes to come, and hee prophecyeth of the times that are a-far off.* Ezek. 12. 27

Ah young men! young men, by putting far away this day, you gratifie Satan, you ſtrengthen ſin, you provoke the Lord, you make the work of faith and repentance more hard and difficult, you lay a ſad foundation for the greateſt fears and doubts.

Ah! how ſoon may that ſad word bee fulfilled upon you. *The Lord of that ſervant that ſaith, his Lord delayeth his coming, ſhall come in a day when hee looketh not for him, and in an hour that hee is not aware of, and ſhall cut him aſunder* (or cut him off) *and appoint him his portion with Hypocrites, there ſhall bee weeping and gnaſhing* Mat. 24. 48, 49, 50, 51.

of

of teeth. When *Sodom*, when *Pharaoh*, when *Agag*, when *Amalek*, when *Haman*, when *Herod*, when *Nebuchadnezzar*, when *Belshazzar*, when *Dives*, when the fool in the Gospel were all in their prime, their pride, when they were all in a flourishing state, and upon the very top of their glory, how strangely, how suddenly, how sadly, how fearfully, how wonderfully, were they brought down to the grave, to Hell!

Ah young man! who art thou, and what is thy name, or fame, what is thy power or place, what is thy dignity or glory, that thou darest promise thy self an exemption from sharing in as sad a portion as ever Justice gave to those who were once very high, who were seated among the stars, but are now brought down to the sides of the pit? I have read a story of one, that gave a young Prodigal a Ring with a deaths head on this condition, that hee should one hour daily for seven

Isa. 13. 10, 11, 2, 13, 14, 15, 6, 17.

daies

daies together, look and think upon it, which bred a great change in his life.

All young men! the serious thoughts of death may do that for you, that neither friends, counsel, examples, prayers, Sermons, tears hath not done to this very day. Well, remember this, to labour not to die, is labour in vain, and to put this day far from you, and to live without fear of death, is to die living. Death seizeth on old men, and lies wait for the youngest. Death is oftentimes as near the young mans back, as it is to the old mans face.

Senibus mors in januis, adolescentibus in insidiis. Bernard. De convers. ad Cler. c. 14.

It is storied of *Charles* the fourth, King of *France*, that being one time affected with the sense of his many and great sins, hee fetcht a deep sigh, and said to his wife, by the help of God, I will now so carry my self all my life long, that I will never offend him more; which words hee had no sooner uttered, but hee fell down dead, and died.

Do

Do not young men put this day far from you, leaſt you are ſuddenly ſurprized, and then you cry out (when too late) a Kingdome for a Chriſt, a Kingdome for a Chriſt; as once Crookt-back *Richard* the third in his diſtreſſe, a Kingdome for a horſe, a Kingdome for a horſe.

Ah young men! did you never hear of a young man that cryed out; Oh! I am ſo ſick that I cannot live, and yet (woful wretch that I am) ſo ſinful, that I dare not die; Oh that I might live! Oh that I might die! Oh that I might do neither. Well young men, remember this, the frequent, the ſerious thoughts of death will prevent many a ſin, it will arm you againſt many temptations, it will ſecure you from many afflictions, it will keep you from doting on the World, it will make you do much in a little time, it will make death eaſy when it comes, and it will make you look out betimes for a Kingdome that

2 Pet. 1. 13, 14. Eccleſ. 9. 10.

ſhakes

ſhakes not, for riches that corrupt not, and for glory that fadeth not away. Therefore do not, O do not put the day of death farre from you. Take heed of crying, *Cras, Cras,* to morrow, to morrow, ſaith *Luther*, for a man lives forty years before hee knows himſelf to bee a fool, and by that time hee ſees his folly, his life is finiſhed, ſo men dye before they begin to live.

Secondly, If you would bee good betimes, then take heed of leaning to your own underſtanding.

This Counſell wiſe *Solomon* gives to his ſon (or the young men in his time) *My ſonne forget not my Law, but let thy heart keep my Commandements: Truſt in the Lord with all thy heart, and lean not to thy own underſtanding.*

Prov. 3. 1. 5 Lean not, is a Metaphor from an old or ſick man leaning on his ſtaff, &c.

Youth is the age of folly, of vain-hopes, and over-grown confidence. Ah! how wiſe might

many have been; had they not been too early wiſe in their own opinion.

Reboboams young Counſellors proved the overthrow of his Kingdome. Tis brave for youth in all things to bee diſcreet and ſober minded. Three vertues they ſay are prime ornaments of youth, modeſty, ſilence, and obedience.

Ah! Young men, keep cloſe in every action to this one principle, *viz.* in every action reſolve to bee diſcreet and wiſe, rather than affectionate and ſingular.

I Remember that a young Gentleman of *Athens* being to anſwer for his life, hired an Orator to make his defence, and it pleaſed him well at his firſt reading, but when the young man by often reading it, that hee might recite it publikely by heart, begunne to grow weary and diſpleaſed with it, the Orator bid him conſider that the

Judges

Judges and the People were to hear it but once, and then it was likely that they at the first instant might bee as well pleased as he.

Ah! Young men, your leaning upon your selves, or upon others, will in the end bee bitternesse and vexation of spirit; Young men are very apt to lean on their own Wit, Wisdome, Arts, parts, as old men are to lean on a staffe to support them; (as the Hebrew word signifies, that is rendered lean, in that of *Prov.* 3.5.) this hath been the bane of many a choice Wit, the loss of many a brave head, the ruine of many a subtile pate.

שען *Shaghan.*

Ajax thought it was for cowards and weaklings to lean upon the Lord for succour, not for him, whence hee was foiled; lean not to great parts, lean not to natural or acquired accomplishments, least you loose them and your selves too. Leaning to

natural, or moral excellencies is the ready way to bee stript of all. *Babylon* that bore her self bold upon her high Towers thick walls, and twenty years provision laid in for a siege, was surprized by *Cyrus*.

'Twas said of *Cæsar*, that he received not his wounds from the swords of enemies, but from the hands of friends; that is, from trusting in them.

Ah! How many young men have been wounded, yea, slain by trusting to their own understanding, their own abilities. 'Twas an excellent saying of *Austin* (*in te stas, et non stas*) he that stands upon his own strength shall never stand. A Creature if like a single drop left to it self, it spends and wastes it self presently, but if like a drop in the fountain and Ocean of being, it hath abundance of security.

Ah! Young men, Young men, if you will needs be leaning, then lean upon precious Promises,

2 Pet. 1. 4
Psal. 27. 1

ſes, lean upon the rock that is higher than your ſelves, lean upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſt as *John* did, who was the youngeſt of all the Diſciples, and the moſt beloved of all the Diſciples. *John* leaned much, and Chriſt loved him much. O lean upon Chriſts wiſdome for direction, lean upon his power for protection, lean upon (his Purſe) his fulneſs for Proviſion, lean upon his eye for approbation, lean upon his righteouſneſs for juſtification, lean upon his blood for remiſſion, lean upon his merits for ſalvation. As the young Vine without her wall to ſupport her, will fall and ſink: So will you young men without Chriſt puts under his everlaſting armes to ſupport you, and uphold you; therefore above all leanings, lean upon him, by leaning on him you will engage him; by leaning on him you will gain more honor than you can give; by leaning on him, you

John 21.20.ch. 13.23.

Can. 8.5

may even command him, and make him eternally yours, &c.

Thirdly, If you would bee good betimes, if you would seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of your dayes, then take heed of flatterers and flatterie. Ah! how many Young men might have been very good, who are now exceeding bad, by hearkning to flatterers, and affecting flattery. Flattery undid young *Rehoboam*, *Ahab*, *Herod*, *Nero*, *Alexander*, &c. Flatterers are soul-murderers, they are soul-undoers, they are like evil Chyrurgions that skin over the wound, but never heal it.

1 Kin. 12. and ch. 22. Act. 12. 22, 23, 24.

Anastatius the Emperours motto was (*mellitum venenum blanda oratio*) smooth talk proves often sweet Poyson; Flattery is the very spring and mother of all impiety, it blows the Trumpet and draws poor souls into rebellion against God, as *Sheba* drew *Israel* to rebel against *David*,

David, it put our first Parents upon tasting the forbidden fruit, it put *Absolon* upon dethroning of his father, it put *Haman* upon plotting the ruine of the Jews, it put *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram* upon rebelling against *Moses*; it makes men call evil good, and good evil, darkneſſe light, and light darkneſs, &c. it puts perſons upon neglecting the means of Grace, upon undervaluing the means of Grace, and upon contemning the means of Grace; it puts men upon abaſing God, ſlighting Chriſt, and vexing the ſpirit, it unmans a man, it makes him call black, white, and white black, it makes a man change Pearls for Pebles, and Gold for Counters, it makes a man judge himſelf wiſe, when hee is fooliſh; knowing, when hee is ignorant; holy, when hee is Prophane; free, when hee is a Priſoner; rich, when hee is Poor; high, when hee is low; full, when hee is empty; happy, when he is miſerable.

The Flatterers told *Dionyſius* that his ſpittle was as ſweet as honey. Rev. 3.17,18

ſerable. Ah! Young men, young men, take heed of Flatterers, they are the very worſt of ſinners, they are left of God, blinded by Satan, hardned in ſin, and ripened for hel. God declares ſadly againſt them, and that in his word, and in his works; in his word, as you may ſee by comparing theſe ſcriptures together, *Deut.* 29. 18, 19, 20. *Pſal.* 78. 36 *Pſal.* 36. 1. 2. *Job.* 17. 5. *Ezek.* 12. 24. *Dan.* 11. 21, 32, 34. *Pſ.* 12. 2, 3. *They ſpeak vanity every one with his neighbour, with flattering lips, and with a double heart, do they ſpeak. The Lord ſhall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that ſpeaketh proud things*; And as God declares ſadly againſt them in his word, ſo hee hath declared terribly againſt them in his works, as you may runne and read in his judgements executed upon *Ahabs* flattering Prophets, and upon *Haman*, and upon *Daniels* (Princely) falſe accuſers, &c. And why then will not you

Karath ſignifies any cutting off, either by death or baniſhment, &c.

you ſtop your ears againſt thoſe wretches, that the hand and heart of God is ſo much againſt?

Again, As God declares againſt them, ſo good men deteſt them, and declare againſt them, as you may ſee by comparing theſe Scriptures together, *Pſal.* 5. 8, 9, 10. *Prov.* 2. 16. *Prov.* 7. 21. *Prov.* 28. 23. *Job* 32. 21, 22. 1 *Theſſ.* 2. 5. 20. *Prov.* 20. 19. *Meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips*? Why ſo? why, becauſe a man that flattereth his Neighbour, ſpreadeth a net for his feet, *Prov.* 29. 5. The Hebrew word (*Mahhalik* from *hhalak*) that is here rendred flatterer, ſignifies a ſmooth boots, a ſoft butter-ſpoken man, becauſe flatterers uſeth ſmooth ſoft ſpeeches. Alſo the word ſignifies to divide, becauſe a Flatterers tongue is divided from his heart. Flatterers have their nets, and thoſe that give ear to them will bee taken to their ruine. A lying tongue

A preacher in *Conſtantines* time, preſumed to call the Emperour Saint to his face, but he went away with a check. *Euſeb. de vit. Conſt* l. 4. 4

tongue hateth those that are afflicted by it, and a flattering mouth worketh ruine, *Prov.26. ult.* A flattering mouth ruines name, fame, estate, body, soul, life.

Valerian the Roman Emperour used to say (*Non acerba sed blanda*) not bitter, but flattering words do all the mischeif. When *Alexander* the Great, was hit with an Arrow in the siege of an *Indian* City which would not heal, hee said to his Parasites, you say that I am *Jupiters* son, but this wound cryes that I am but a man.

Now shall good men detest them, and abhor them as they are the pest of pests, the plague of plagues, and will you own them, will you take pleasure in them, to your ruine here and hereafter, the Lord forbid? Oh say to all flatterers, as hee to his Idols, *Get you hence, for what have I more to do with you.* Hos.14. 8

Nay once more consider, that not

The Hebrew word דחה *Dabbah*, signifies such a violent forceing of one, as he cannot stand, it signifies to throw down, to drive on forward till a man fall into destruction.

not onely the good, but the bad, not onely the beſt, but (ſome of) the worſt of men have manifeſted their deteſtation of Flatterers and flattery.

Leo the Emperour uſed to ſay, (*occulti inimici peſſimi*) a cloſe enemy is farre worſe than an open. When a Court Paraſite praiſed *Sigiſmund* the Emperour above meaſure, the Emperour gave him a ſound box on the ear.

When *Ariſtobulus* the Hiſtorian preſented to *Alexander* the Great book that hee had written of his glorious acts, wherein hee had flatteringly made him greater than he was, *Alexander* (after he had read the book) threw it into the River *Hydaſpes*, and ſaid to the Author, it were a good deed to throw thee after it.

When the Flatterers flattered *Antigonus*, hee cryed out (*mentiris, mentiris in gutture, Hæ virtutes non latent in me*) thou lieſt, thou lieſt in thy throat, theſe vertues

tues that thou ſpeakeſt of, I have not in me, but I am like a Leopard that have ten black ſpots to one white.

Auguſtus Cæſar, and *Tiberius Cæſar*, were deadly enemies to flatterers, inſomuch that they would not bee called Lords by their own children.

A good Symbole is attributed to *Trebonianus Gallus*, *viz.* (*Nemo amicus idem et adulator*) no Flatterer can be a true friend.

Ariſtippus (the Philoſopher) ſeeing *Diogenes* waſhing of herbs for his dinner, ſaid, if *Diogenes* knew how to make uſe of Kings, hee need not live upon raw herbs as he doth, to which *Diogenes* replyed, that if *Ariſtippus* could content himſelf with herbs, hee need not to turn Spaniel, or to flatter King *Dionyſius* for a meals meat.

Ah! Young men, Young men, ſhall God, ſhall good men, ſhall bad men, deteſt and declare againſt Flatterers and flattery, and

and will not you turn a deaf ear upon them, yea fly from them, as from a Serpent, and ſhun them as you would ſhun hell it ſelf, if you do not, the very Heathens but now cited, will riſe in judgement againſt you.

Flatterers are the very worſt of ſinners. The Flatterers told *Cæſar* that his freckles in his face, were like the ſtarres in the Firmament, they bought and ſold *Aurelius* the Emperour at pleaſure. And *Auguſtus* complained when *Varrus* was dead, that hee had none now left that would deal plainly and faithfully with him.

So men may gain by Flattery they will bee like *Harpalus*, who ſaid (*Quod Regi placet, mihi placet*) that which pleaſeth the King, pleaſeth mee.

When *Aſtyages* ſet his own Sonne before him to feed upon him; O but let every young man ſay, (into whoſe hands this treatiſe ſhall fall) *Quod Deo*

placet

placet mihi placet) that which pleaſeth God pleaſeth mee. I have been the longer upon this out of love to young mens ſouls, who are ſo apt to bee inſnared in the Flatterers net, if ever you would bee good in good earneſt, you muſt abhor Flatterers as the firſt born of the Devil, and as ſuch that are moſt pernitious to mens happineſſe both here and hereafter.

Whileſt an Aſſe is ſtroaked under the belly you may lay on his back what burden you pleaſe.

It is reported of one *Oramazes* that hee had an enchanted Egg, in which (as hee boaſted himſelf) hee had incloſed all the happineſs of the World, but being broken, nothing was found in it but Wind. Flatterers are the greateſt cheaters, the greateſt deceivers, in the world.

They ſay of the *Crocodile*, that when hee hath killed a man, he will weep over him, as if hee were ſorry; and did repent for what he had done, the Application is eaſy.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, If you would bee good betimes, if you would ſeek and ſerve the Lord in the ſpring and morning of your dayes, then take heed of engaged affections to the things of the World. The Young man in the Goſpel took many a ſtep towards heaven, *All theſe things have I kept from my Youth up*, what lack I yet? Chriſt makes a very fair offer to him in the next words, *Jeſus ſaid unto him, if thou wilt be perfect, go and ſell that thou haſt, and give to the Poor, and thou ſhalt have treaſure in heaven, and come and follow mee*; thou ſhalt have heaven for earth, a Sea for a drop, a treaſure for a mite, a crown for a crum. I but the young mans affections were ſtrongly engaged to the things of the world, and therefore he turns his back upon Chriſt, and goes away ſorrowful, becauſe he had great poſſeſſions. O the madneſs, the folly of this young man, who to enjoy a little temporal

Mat. 19.16-24

Multi emendo res noxias ſunt miſeri, habendo miſeriores. Auguſt. in Pſal. 26.

temporal felicity, hath bid an everlaſting farewell to Chriſt and Glory, in that *Gen.*13.2. it is ſaid that *Abraham* was very rich in Cattel, in ſilver, and in gold, the Hebrew word (*Cabedh*) that is here rendred rich, ſignifies heavy, it ſignifies a burden, to ſhew us that riches are a heavy burden, and a hinderance many times to heaven and happineſſe, and this young man in the Goſpel found it ſo to his eternal undoing. Though the Load-ſtone cannot draw the Iron when the Diamond is in preſence, yet earthly poſſeſſions did draw this young mans ſoul away, when Chriſt the Pearl of price was preſent, the World is a ſilken net, and this young man found it ſo; the world is like Golden fetters, and this young man found it ſo; the world is like ſweet poyſon, and this young man found it ſo; for hee had drunk ſo large a draught of it, that there was no room in his ſoul for Chriſt or heaven, for grace

They are *dulce venenum*, a ſweet poyſon. *Bern.*

grace, or glory. Some ſay that when the Serpent *Scytale* cannot overtake the flying Paſſengers, ſhee doth with her beautiful colours ſo aſtoniſh and amaze them, that they have no power to paſs away, till ſhe have ſtung them; ſuch a Serpent the World proved to the young man in the Goſpel, it did ſo affect him and take him, ſo amaze him, and amuze him, that hee could not ſtir till it ſtung him to death. When the Moon is fulleſt it is furtheſt from the Sun, ſo the more men have of the World, the further (commonly) they are from God, and this the young man in the Goſpel made good.

Many have ventured life and limb, and many a better thing to gain the things of this World, and yet after all, they have got nothing at all. *Achans* golden wedge, proved a wedge to cleave him, and his garment, a garment to ſhrow'd him.

If money were thrown to the dogs, they would not ſo much as ſmell at it, the greater is their folly and madneſſe that will go to hells gates for it.

The whole world is circular,

the heart of man is triangular, and wee know a circle cannot fill a triangle; yea if it be not filled with the three persons in Trinity, it will bee filled with the world, the Flesh, and the Devil. The World may be resembled to the fruit that undid us all, which was fair to the sight, smooth in handling, sweet in taste, but deadly in effect and operation.

Ah! Young men, young men, have none of you found it so?

1 King. 9. 13 The World in all its bravery is no better than the Cities which *Solomon* gave to *Hiram*, which hee called *Cabul*, that is to say, displeasing -- or dirty, the World will afford nothing but trivial Flowers, surrounded with many bryers: O the Vanity! the uncertainty, the imperfection of all things below, if a man should weigh his pay and his pains together, his miseries, and his pleasures together, his joys and his

his sorrows together, his mercies, and his crosses together, his good dates, and his bad dayes together, will he not conclude Vanity of Vanity, and all is Vanity?

It was a wise and Christian Speech of *Charles* the fifth, to the Duke of *Venice*, who when hee had shew'd him the glory of his Princely Palace and earthly Paradise, instead of admiring it or him for it, onely returned him this grave and serious memento (*Hæc sunt quæ faciunt invitos mori*) these are the things which make us unwilling to dye, it was a good saying of one to a great Lord (upon his shewing him his stately house and pleasant Gardens) Sir you had need make sure of heaven, or else when you dye, you will bee a very great looser.

Ah! Young men, Young men, tis onely heaven that is above all winds, stormes, and tempests, nor hath God cast

In my other Treatises you may read more of the vanity, insufficiency, impotency, mutability, uncertainty, and inconstancy of the World, and to them I refer you.

man out of Paradise for him to think to finde out another Paradise in this world, the main reason, why many young men dote upon the world, is because they are not acquainted with a greater glory; men ate Acorns till they were acquainted with the use of Wheat. The woman had the Moon under her feet when shee was cloathed with the Sun, and had a Crown of twelve starrs upon her head.

Rev. 12. 1

Ah! Young men, were you but cloathed with the Sunne of Righteousnes, and had you a crown set upon your heads, by the hand of faith, you would have all the things of this world which are as low, bespotted, and mutable, as the Moon, under your feet; well young men, as ever you would be good betimes, sit loose from the things of this world, be no longer worshippers of this Golden calf, and never let the World, that should bee but your Servant, become your Lord; O

Heb. 11. 24, 25, 26, 27, 35. ch. 10. 34.

let

Oh let not the Devil and the World have more ſervice for an ounce of gold! than Chriſt ſhall have for the Kingdome of Heaven.

Ah young men! the world and you muſt part, or Chriſt and you will never meet; *you cannot ſerve God, and Mammon.* The two poles ſhall ſooner meet, than the love of Chriſt, and the love of the world. Mat. 6. 24.

Fifthly, if you would be good betimes, if you would know, ſeek, and ſerve the Lord in the ſpring and morning of your youth; then take heed betimes of carnal reaſon, take heed of conſulting with fleſh and blood; many a hopeful young man hath been undone temporally, and undone eternally by hearkening to thoſe evil counſellors. Gal. 1. 15, 16.

Carnal reaſon is an enemy, yea an utter enemy, nay, it is not only an utter enemy, but it is enmity, yea enmities, *Rom.* 8. 7. An enemy may bee reconciled, but

Cicero a Heathen could ſay, that man would not bee ſo wicked, and do ſo wickedly, were it not for his reaſon.

enmity can never bee reconciled. Carnal Reason is not only averse, but it is utterly averse to all goodnesse; it builds strong holds and syllogisms against the most glorious Gospel-truths, and accounts the precious things of Christ as a strange thing; carnal Reason will make God and Gospel do homage to it; when carnal Reason is in the Throne, Christ and his truths must all bow, or bee judged before its bar.

Ah young men, young men! as ever you would bee good betimes, stop your ears against all carnal Reasonings within you; carnal Reason judges the choicest things of the Gospel to bee meer foolishnesse; it is purblinde, and cannot see how to make a right judgement of Christ, his word, his waies, and yet will controule all.

1 Cor. 1. 23.

If you are resolved to bee still scholars to this Master, then you must resolve to bee unhappy here,

and

and miserable hereafter. But

It is safer and better for you to imitate those young men, who in the morning of their daies have graciously, wisely, and resolutely withstood those evil Counsellors, carnal Reason, flesh and blood; *Joseph* and *Moses*, *Daniel*, *Shadrach*, *Meshach*, and *Abednego*, all these in the Prim-rose of their youth were good, at turning the deaf ear to carnal counsel, and carnal counsellors.

Gen. 39.7,8,9, 10, 11, &c. Heb. 11.24,25, 26. Dan. 1.

Cassianus reports of a young man that had given himself up to a Christian life, and his Parents mis-liking that way, they wrote letters to him, to perswade him from it; and when hee knew there were letters come from them, hee would not open them, but threw them into the fire; this example is worth a following.

Another famous example you have in the story of King *Edward* the sixth, when *Cranmer* and *Ridly* came to him, and were very earnest to have him give way

to his Siſter the Lady *Mary* to have Maſſe; hee ſtood out and pleaded the cate with them that it was a ſin againſt God, and provoking to the eyes of his glory, &c. but they ſtill continued to uſe many carnal arguments to perſwade the King (who was but a child about fifteen years of age) but hee withſtood them a great while, but at length when hee ſaw hee could not prevail with all his pleading againſt thoſe grave men, but that they ſtill continued their ſuit, hee burſt out into bitter weeping, and ſobing, deſiring them to deſiſt; the motioners, ſeeing his zeal and conſtancy wept as faſt as hee, and being overcome, they went away, and told one that the King had more divinity in his little finger, than they had in all their bodies. Ah young men! it will bee your ſafety, and your glory to write after this princely coppy, when you are ſurrounded with carnal reaſon, and carnal counſellors, &c. Sixthly

Sixthly, and laſtly, If you would bee good betimes, then take heed of comparing your ſelves with thoſe that are worſe than your ſelves. Young men are very apt to compare themſelves with thoſe that are worſe than themſelves, and this proves a ſnare unto them, yea oftentimes their bane, their ruine; As it did the young Phariſee in the Goſpel, who pleaded his negative Righteouſneſſe, hee was not as other men are, extortioners, unjuſt, adulterers, and ſtood on his comparative goodneſſe, nor as this Publican; hee ſtands not only upon his compariſons, but upon his diſpariſons, being blind at home, and too quick-ſighted abroad, hee contemneth and condemneth the poor Publican who was better than himſelf; making good, that ſaying of *Seneca* the nature of man, ſaith hee, is very apt (*utimur perſpicillis magis quam ſpeculis*) to uſe ſpectacles to behold other mens faults, rather than

Joh. 9. 39, 40.

Luk. 18. 11, 12, 13, 14.

Thales one of the ſeven ſages being asked what was the eaſieſt thing in the world to do, anſwered, to know other mens faults, and none of our own.

than looking-glasses to behold our own; such Pharisees do justly incur the censure which that sowre Philosopher past upon Grammarians, that they were better acquainted with the evil of *Ulysses*, than with their own.

Diogenes apud Laertium. l. 6.

Ah young men, young men! you know, hee that drinks poison, though hee drinks not so much as another, and hee that commits treason, though not so great, so high treason as another, shall yet as certainly bee poisoned, and hanged, as hee that hath drunk a greater quantity of poison; and committed higher acts of treason.

Sirs, do not delude and befool your own souls, if you are not as wicked as others, you shall not bee as much tormented as others, but yet you shall bee as certainly damned as others, you shall as certain to hell as others, you shall as sure bee shut out for ever from God, Christ, Saints, Angels, and all the treasures, pleasures,

Mat. 11. 22, 23, 24, 25. As in Heaven one is more glorious than another, so in Hell one shall bee more miserable than another. Aug.

pleaſures, and glories of Heaven, as others, except it bee prevented, by timely repentance on your ſide, and pardoning mercy on Gods. Wilt thou count it madneſſe Oh young man in him that is ſick to reaſon thus, I am not ſo ſick as ſuch and ſuch, and therefore I will not ſend to the Phyſitian, and in the wounded man to ſay, I am not ſo deſperately wounded as ſuch and ſuch, and therefore I will not ſend to the Surgeon; and in the traitor to ſay, I am not guilty of ſo many foul and hainous treaſons as ſuch and ſuch, and therefore I will not look after a pardon; and in the neceſſitous man, to ſay, I am not ſo hard put to it as ſuch and ſuch, and therefore I will not welcome a hand of charity? and wilt thou not count it the greateſt madneſſe in the world for thee to put off thy repentance, and thy returning to the Lord in the ſpring and morning of thy youth, becauſe that thou art not as ſinful

as wicked as such and such, if to have a softer bed, a milder punishment in hell, than others, will satisfy thee, then go on; but if thou art afraid of the worm that never dyes, and of the fire that never goes out, being like that stone in *Arcadia*, which being once kindled, could not be quenched; O then begin to bee good betimes; O seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of your dayes!

Chrysost. Hom. 44. in Matth.

To think often of Hell, is the way to be preserv'd from falling into hell. Ah! Young men, Young men, that you would often consider of the bitterness, of the damneds torments, and of the pittilesness of their torments, and of the diversity of their torments, and of the easelesnes of their torments, and of the remedilesness of their torments. (*Momentaneum est quod delectat, Æternum quod cruciat.*) The sinners delight here is momentany, that which torments hereafter is perpetual; when a Sin-

Sinner is in hell, doſt thou think Oh young man, that another Chriſt ſhall be found to dye for him, or that the ſame Chriſt will bee crucifyed again for him, or that another Goſpel ſhould bee preached to him, Surely no.

Ah, Why then wilt thou not betimes return and ſeek out after the things that belong to thy everlaſting Peace. I have read of Pope *Clement* the fifth, that when a young Nephew of his dyed, hee ſent his Chaplain to a Necromancer, to know of him how it fared with him in the other World, the Conjurer ſhewed him to the Chaplain lying in a fiery bed in hell, which when the Pope underſtood, hee never joyed more, &c. *Fac. Rev. hiſt. Pontif. Rom.* 199

Ah! Young man, that theſe occaſional hints of hell, may bee a means to preſerve thee from lying in thoſe everlaſting Flames.

Bellarmine tells us of a certain advocate of the Court of *Rome*, that

Bellar. de arte moriendi, l. 2. c. 10.

that being at the point of death, was ſtirred up by them that ſtood by to repent and call upon God for mercy, hee with a conſtant countenance, and without ſigne of fear, turned his ſpeech to God, and ſaid, Lord, I have a deſire to ſpeak unto thee, not for my ſelf, but for my wife and Children, for I am haſtening to hell, neither is there any thing that thou ſhouldeſt do for mee; and this he ſpake ſaith *Bellarmine* (who was preſent and heard it) as if hee had ſpoke of a journey to ſome Village, or Town, and was no more affrighted.

Sir *Francis Bacon* alſo in his Hiſtory of *Henry* the Seventh, relates how it was a common by-word of the Lord *Cordes*, that hee would bee content to lye ſeven years in hell, ſo hee might win *Calice* from the Engliſh; but if thou O young man art given up to ſuch deſperate Atheiſme, and carnal Apprehenſions of Hell; I am affraid God will con-

confute thee one day by fire and brimstone, but I would willingly hope better things of all those young persons, into whose hands this Treatise shall fall, and thus you see what things must bee declined and avoided, if ever you would be good betimes, if ever you would seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of your daies.

But in the second place, as those things must bee declined, so other things must carefully and diligently bee practised, if ever you would be good betimes. I shall instance onely in those that are most considerable and weighty, as

First, if ever you would bee good betimes, &c. then you must labour to bee acquainted with four things betimes,

First, You must labour to acquaint your selves with the Scripture betimes, you must study the Word betimes, *David* studied the Word in the morning of his

Psal.119.97,98 99,100, 101, 102,103

his dayes in the primrose of his youth, and this made him wiser than his enemies, yea, than his teachers, this made him as much excel the Ancients, as the Sunne excels the Moon, or as the Moon excels the twinkling stars. *Timothy* was good betimes, and no wonder, for in the prime-rose of his dayes, hee was acquainted with the Scripture, hee was inured to the Word from his child-hood, yea from his infancy, as the word properly signifies, so in that 119 *Psalm* the 9. *Wherewithall shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed according to thy Word*; there is no way to a holy heart, and a clean life, but by acquainting of your selves with the Word betimes; one hath long since observed, that God hath bowed down the Scriptures to the capacity even of babes and sucklings, that all excuse may be taken away; and that young men may bee encouraged to study the Scrip-

2 Tim. 3. 15 ἀπὸ βρέφους. from a sucking.

Aug.

Scripture betimes. Ah! Young men, no Hiſtories are comparable to the Hiſtories of the Scriptures, 1 for Antiquity. 2 Rarity. 3 Variety. 4 Brevity. 5 Perſpicuity. 6 Harmony. 7 Verity. All other books cannot equal Gods, either in age, or authority, in dignity, or excellency, in ſufficiency, or glory.

Adoro Plenitudinem Scripturarum. Tertullian.

Moſes is found more ancient and more honourable, than all thoſe whom the *Grecians* make moſt ancient and honourable; as *Homer*, *Heſiod*, and *Jupiter* himſelf, whom the *Greeks* have ſeated in the top of their divinity.

The whole Scripture is but one intire love letter, diſpatcht from the Lord Chriſt to his beloved Spouſe, and who then but would ſtill be a reading in this love letter? Like *Cæcilia* a Roman maiden of Noble Parentage, who carried alwaies about her the New-Teſtament, that ſhee might

Gregory, calls the Scripture (*Cor & animam Dei*) the heart and ſoul of God.

might ſtill be a reading in Chriſts love letter, and behold the ſweet workings of his love, and heart towards his dear and precious ones.

Luther found ſo much ſweetneſſe in the Word, in Chriſts love letter, that made him ſay, he would not live in Paradiſe if he might, without the word (*at cum verbo etiam in inferno facile eſt vivere*) but with the Word hee could live in hell it ſelf.

The Word is like the ſtone *Garamantides*, that hath drops of Gold in it ſelf, enriching of the beleeving ſoul. This the Martyrs found, which made them willing to give a load of hay for a few leaves of the Bible in *Engliſh*.

Auguſtine profeſſeth that the Sacred Scriptures were his holy delight; And *Hierom* tells (us) of one *Nepotianus*, who by long and aſſiduous meditation on the holy Scriptures, had made his breaſt the library of Jeſus Chriſt.

Hier. Epiſtola. ad Heliod. in Epitaphium Nepotiani.

And

And *Rabbi Chiia* in the *Jeruſalem Talmud*, ſaith, that in his account all the World is not of equal value with one word out of the Law. That which a Papiſt reports lyingly of their Sacrament, of the Maſs, *viz.* that there are as many myſteries in it, as there bee drops in the Sea, duſt on the earth, Angels in heaven, ſtars in the skye, Atomes in the Sun-beams, or ſand on the Sea-ſhore, &c. may be truly aſſerted of the holy Scriptures.

Oh the myſteries, the excellencies, the glories, that are in the Word; Ah, no book to this book, none ſo uſeful, none ſo needful, none ſo delightful, none ſo neceſſary to make you happy, and to keep you happy, as this. It is ſaid of *Cæſar*, (*major fuit cura Cæſari libellorum quam purpura*) that he had greater care of his books, than of his Royal Robes, for ſwimming thorow the waters to eſcape his enemies, hee carried his books in his hand

above the waters, but loſt his Robe; now what are *Caſars* books to Gods books?

Pſ. 119

Ah! Young men, young men, the Word of the Lord is a light to guide you; a Counſellor to counſel you, a comforter to comfort you, a ſtaffe to ſupport you, a ſword to defend you, and a Phyſitian to cure you, the word is a Mine to enrich you, a Robe to cloath you, and a Crown to crown you, it is bread to ſtrengthen you, and wine to cheere you, and a honey-comb to feaſt you, and muſick to delight you, and a Paradiſe to entertain you.

The Jewiſh Rabbins were wont to ſay, that upon every letter of the Law, there hangs mountains of profitable matter.

Oh! Therefore before all, and above all, ſearch the Scripture; ſtudy the Scripture, dwell on the Scripture, delight in the Scripture, treaſure up the Scripture, no wiſdome to ſcripture Wiſdome, no knowledge to Scripture knowledge, no experience to Scripture experience, no comforts to Scripture comforts, no

delights

delights to Scripture delights, no convictions to Scripture convictions, nor no converſion to ſcripture converſion.

Auguſtin hearing a voice from heaven, that bad him take and read, whereupon turning open the new-Teſtament, hee fell upon that place, *Let us walk honeſtly, as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenneſſe, not in chambering and wantonneſſe, not in ſtrife, and enuying. But put yee on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and make not proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfil the luſts thereof.* This Scripture ſo ſunk into his heart, as that it proved the means of his converſion, as himſelf reports; this *Auguſtin* as hee was once Preaching, his memory failing of him contrary to his purpoſe, he fell upon reproving the *Manicheans*, and by a ſcripture or two not before thought of, to confute their hereſies, he converted *Firmus* a *Manichean*, as he after acknowledged to *Auguſtin*, bleſſing God for that ſermon.

Tolle lege.

Rom. 13. 13, 14

Lib. 8. conf. cap. 12.

Poſſidon de vita, Auguſtin.

It is reported of one *Adrianus*, who seeing the Martyrs suffer such grievous things in the cause of God, hee asked what was that which caused them to suffer such things, and one of them named that text, *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entred into the heart of man to conceive the things which God hath prepared for them that love him*, and this text was set home, with such a power upon him, as that it converted him, and made him to profess Religion, and not onely to profess it, but to dye a martyr for it.

1 Cor. 2.9

Cyprian was converted by reading the Prophecy of *Jonah*. *Junius* was converted by reading the 1 Chapter of *John* the Evangelist.

I have read of a scandalous Minister that was struck at the heart, and converted in reading that scripture, *Thou which teachest another, teachest thou not thy self, &c?*

Rom. 2, 21

Wee read that *Paphnutius* converted *Thais* and *Ephron*, two famous

mous

mous ſtrumpets from uncleanneſſe, only with this Scripture Argument, That God ſeeth all things in the dark, when the doors are faſt, the windows ſhut, the Curtains drawn, &c. Heb. 4. 13.

I have read of a poor man, who perſwaded a young Scholler to leave reading of Poetry, &c. and fall upon reading of the Scripture, which accordingly hee did; and it pleaſed the Lord, before hee had read out *Geneſis*, to change his heart, and to turn him to the Lord in the Primroſe of his daies, hee being then but twenty years of age.

I have read of a young Lady, called *Potamia*, of a very illuſtrious family, who endured very much in her Martyrdome, by the extream cruelty of *Baſilides* her executioner, yet after her death hee bethinking himſelf of the holy words, and Scripture expreſſions that were uttered by her, during her cruel torments, became a Chriſtian, and within Origen was her Schoolmaſter.

few daies after, was himſelf likewiſe crowned with Martyrdome.

James Andreas a godly Miniſter, hearing of a Jew, that for theft was hanged by the heels, with his head downward, having not ſeen that kinde of puniſhment, hee went to the place where hee was hanging between two Dogs that were alwaies ſnatching at him to eat his fleſh, the poor wretch repeated in Hebrew ſome verſes of the Pſalms, wherein hee cryed to God for mercy, whereupon *Andreas* went near to him, and inſtructed him in the Principles of Chriſtian Religion, about Chriſt the *Meſſiah*, &c. Exhorting him to beleeve in him, and it pleaſed God ſo to bleſſe his Scripture exhortations to him, that the Dogs gave over tearing of his fleſh, and the poor Jew deſired him to procure that hee might bee taken down and baptized, and hung by the neck for the quicker diſpatch

A miracle of mercy.

patch which was done accordingly.

I might produce other instances, but let these suffice to provoke all young persons to a speedy, serious, diligent, and constant study of the Scripture. Ah sirs! you do not know how soon your blinde mindes may bee enlightened, your hard hearts softened, your proud spirits humbled, your sinful natures changed, your defiled consciences purged, your distempered affections regulated, and your poor souls saved, by searching into the Scriptures, by reading the Scripture, and by pondering upon the Scripture; you should lay up the Manna of Gods word in your hearts, as *Moses* laid up the Manna in the golden pot. And as *Tamar* did with the staff and signet that shee received from *Judah*, shee laid them up till shee came to save her life, and did save her life by it, as you may see in holy story.

Much in the word is wrap't up in a little. It is more to bee admired, than to have Homers Iliads comprized in a nut shel. Heb. 9. 4.

Gen. 38. 18. -- 36.

The

The laying up of the word now, may bee the saving of your souls another day.

I have read of little Bees, that when they go out in stormy weather, they will carry a little of their comb or gravel with them, that they may bee ballanced, and not carried away with the winde.

Ah young men, young men! you had need to have your thoughts and hearts ballanced with the precious word, that you may not bee carried away with every winde of Doctrin, as many have been in these daies, to their destruction and confusion.

Narcissus a beautiful youth, though hee would not love them that loved him, yet afterwards fell in love with his own shadow: Ah! how may young men in these daies, who were once lovely and hopeful, are now fallen in love with their own and others shadows, with high

2 Thes. 2. 10, 11, 12.

empty

empty aiery notions, and with ſtrange monſtrous ſpeculations to their own damnation.

Holy *Melanct hon* being newly converted, thought it impoſſible for his hearers to withſtand the evidence of the Goſpel, but ſoon after, hee complained that old *Adam* was too hard for young *Melanct hon*.

Ah young men, young men! if you do not in good earneſt give up your ſelves to the reading, to the ſtudying, to the pondering, to the beleeving, to the affecting, to the applying, and to the living up to the Scripture, Satan will bee too hard for you, the world will bee too hard for you, your luſts will bee too hard for you, temptations will bee too hard for you, and deceivers will bee too hard for you, and in the end you will bee miſerable; and thus much for the firſt thing, &c.

Secondly, if you would bee good betimes, then you muſt acquaint

quaint your ſelves with your ſelves betimes; if you would bee gracious in the ſpring, and morning of your daies: then you muſt ſee betimes how bad you are, how vile, how ſinful, how wretched you are? no man begins to bee good, till hee ſees himſelf to bee bad; the young Prodigal never began to mend, hee never thought of returning to his Father, till hee came to himſelf, till hee began to return into his own ſoul, and ſaw himſelf in an undone condition.

Luk. 15.12, 22.

Ah! Young men, Young men, you muſt ſee your ſelves to bee children of Wrath, to bee Enemies, to bee Strangers, to bee afar off from God, from Chriſt, from the Covenant, from heaven, to bee Sinnes ſervants, and Satans bond ſlaves, the ready way to bee found, is to ſee your ſelves loſt, the firſt ſtep to mercy, is to ſee your miſery, the firſt ſtep towards Heaven is to

Epheſ. 2.1,2,3. 12, 13. Rom. 6. 16. John 8. 44. 2 Tim. 2. 26.

ſee

ſee your ſelves neer to hell, you won't look after the Phyſitian of ſouls, you won't prize the Phyſitian of ſouls, you won't deſire the Phyſitian of ſouls, you won't match with the Phyſitian of ſouls, you won't fall in love, in league with the Phyſitian of ſouls, you won't reſign up your ſelves, to the Phyſitian of ſouls, till you come to ſee your wounds, till you come to feel your diſeaſe, till you ſee the tokens, the plague ſores of divine wrath, and diſpleaſure upon you; as the whole do not need the Phyſitian, ſo they do not deſire, they do not care for the Phyſitian.

Auſtin ſaith, he would willingly go thorow hell to Chriſt, ſo will all that ſee their need of Chriſt.

Ah! Young men, as you would bee good betimes, begin to acquaint your ſelves with your ſinful ſelves betimes, begin to acquaint your ſelves betimes with your natural and undone condition.

Zanche writ a Tractat, *Quod nihil ſcitur.*

There is a threefold ſelf.

1 There is a natural ſelf, as a mans parts, wit, reaſon, will, affect-

affections, and inclinations, &c.

2 A Religious ſelf, and ſo a mans duties, graces, obedience, righteouſneſs, holineſs, are called ones ſelf.

3 There is a ſinful ſelf, and ſo a mans corruptions, luſts, ſinful nature and diſpoſitions are called ones ſelf, now if ever you would bee good betimes, you muſt acquaint your ſelves with your ſinful ſelves betimes.

Luther ſaid, that if a man could perfectly ſee his own faults, the ſight thereof would be a very hell unto him.

Demonicus being asked at what time hee beganne to bee a Philoſopher, anſwered, when I began to know my ſelf. So a man never beginnes to bee a Chriſtian, till he begins to know himſelf. And indeed for a man to know himſelf, to acquaint himſelf with himſelf, is one of the hardeſt works in all the World. For as the eye can ſee all things but it ſelf, ſo moſt can diſcern all faults but their own. *Henry* the Fourth Emperor of *Germany* his uſual ſpeech was (*Multi multa*

ſciunt

ſciunt, ſe autem nemo) many know much, but few know themſelves.

The very heathens did admire that ſaying as an Oracle (*noſce teipſum*) know and bee acquainted with thy own ſelf. The main exhortation of *Chilo* one of the ſeven Sages, was, know thy ſelf. And *Plato* recordeth, that this ſaying of *Chilo*, know thy ſelf, was written in letters of Gold, upon the Portal of *Apolloes* Temple.

Juvenal ſaith, that this ſaying know thy ſelf came from heaven. *Macrobius* ſaith, that the Oracle of *Apollo* being demanded what courſe ſhould bee taken for attaining to felicity? anſwered, onely teach a man to know himſelf.

Thus you ſee that both Divinity and Philoſophy doth agree in this, that the beſt and ſureſt way to true felicity, is, to know our ſelves, to acquaint our ſelves with our ſelves.

This

This duty the Apostle charges upon the *Ephesians*, *Remember that you being in times past Gentiles in the flesh, that at that time yee were without Christ, aliens from the Common-wealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of Promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.* Here are five withouts, without Christ, without the Church, without the Promise, without hope, and without God in the world; man in his natural state is afar off (hee is without) three manner of wayes.

Eph. 2.11.12 Of dull and insensible men, one long since thus complained (*patientius ferre Christi jacturam, quam suam*) that they did more calmly pass by the injuries done to Christ, then those that were done unto themselves; O the plague of unsensiblenesse.

1 In point of opinion and apprehension.

2 In point of fellowship and communion.

3 In point of grace and conversion.

As you would be good betimes, dwell much upon your corrupt nature betimes; Ah! Such is the corruption of our nature, that propound any divine good to it, it is entertained as fire by water, or

wet

wet wood, with hiſſing; propound any evil, then it is like fire to ſtraw, it is like the fooliſh Satyre, that made haſte to kiſs the fire, it is like that unctious matter, which the naturaliſts ſay, ſucks and ſnatches the fire to it, with which it is conſumed; till you come to bee ſenſible of this, you will never beginne to be good, you will never look to have your hearts changed, and your ſouls ſaved.

The *Ethiopians* paint Angels black, and Devils white, in favour of their own complexion, & they ſay, that if the brute creatures could draw a picture of the divine nature, they would make their ſhape the Copy, and thus they flatter and delude themſelves; take heed young men, take heed, that you don't put the like cheats upon your own ſouls, take heed that you bee not like thoſe Limners, who ſo as they can make a mans picture gay and gaudy, care not to draw it,

so as to resemble him, it is safest and best O young man! to know the worst of thy self, and to know thy self as thou art in thy self; and not as thy own flattering heart, or as other flatterers may represent thee to thy self.

Thirdly, If you would bee good betimes, then you must acquaint your selves with Jesus Christ betimes, you must know him betimes, a man never beginnes to bee good, till he begins to know him that is the fountain of all goodness; *This is life eternal to know thee, the onely true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* John 17. 3

The knowledge of Christ is the beginning of eternal life, it is the way to eternal life, it is a taste of eternal life, it is a sure pledge and pawn to the soul of eternal life.

The *Spaniards* say of *Aquinas*, that hee that knows not him, knows not any thing, but hee that knows him, knows all things;

he

he that knows Jesus Christ, not notionally onely, but practically, not apprehensively onely, but affectively, hee knows all things that may make him happy, but hee that knows not Jesus Christ, knows nothing that will stand him in stead when hee shall lye upon a dying bed, and stand before a judgement seat.

Justin Martyr relates, that when in his discourse with *Tryphon*, he mentioned the knowledge of Christ, as conducing to our happiness, and perfection; *Tryphons* friends laught at it; but I hope better things of all those into whose hands this treatise shall fall.

Sirs, the Sunne is not more necessary to the world, the eye to the body, the Pilate to the ship, the General to the army, &c. then the knowledge of Christ betimes, is necessary for all those that would be good betimes.

Dear hearts, as ever you would be good betimes, you must la-

bour even as for Life, to know and bee thorowly acquainted with these six things, concerning Jesus Christ betimes.

First, If you would bee good betimes, then you must know betimes that there is every thing in Christ, that may incourage you to seek him, and serve him, to love him, and obey him, to beleeve on him, and to marry with him. If you look upon his names, his natures, his offices, his graces, his dignities, his excellencies, his royalties, his glories, his fulnesses, they all speak out as much. Are you poor? why Christ hath tryed Gold to enrich you; are you naked? Christ hath white rayment to cloathe you; are you spiritually blind? Christ hath eye-salve that will enlighten you; are you in straits? hee hath wisdome to Counsell you; are you unrighteous? hee will bee righteousnes to you; are you unholy? hee will bee holines and sanctification to you;

Nec Christus, nec cœlum, patitur hyperbolen.

Rev. 3. 18

1 Cor. 1. 30

are

are you hungry? hee is bread to feed you; are you thirsty? hee is wine and milk to satisfy you; are you weary? hee is a bed, a seat, to rest you; are you sick? why, hee is a Physitian to cure you, &c. (*Omne bonum in summo bono*) all good is in the chiefest good. The Creatures have their particular goodness, health hath its particular goodness, and wealth hath its particular goodness, and learning hath its, and the favour of the Creature hath its, &c. but now Jesus Christ hee is an universal good, all the petty excellencies that are scattered abroad in the Creatures, are united to Christ; yea all the whole volume of perfections which is spread thorow heaven and earth is epitomized in him. (*Ipse unus erit tibi omnia, quia in ipso uno bono, bona sunt omnia. Aug.* One Christ will bee to thee instead of all things else, because in him are all good things to be found. *Abrahams* servant brought forth jew-

John. 6 48
Isa. 55. 1
Mat. 11. 28
Mat. 9. 12

Christ is the *Bonum in quo omnia bona.*

Gen. 24. 53

els of silver, and jewels of gold to win *Rebeccah's* heart to *Isaac*; so should you, O young men, be often in presenting to your own view, all those amiable and excellent things that bee in Christ, to win your hearts over to Christ betimes.

Heb. 7. 25. εἰς τὸ παντελὲς. Perpetually, Constantly. Mat. 9. 28 Isa. 63. 1 Mighty to save

Secondly, If you would bee good betimes, then you must know betimes that Jesus Christ is mighty to save, hee is able to save to the uttermost, all them that come unto him, that beleeve in him, that cast themselves upon him. The Lord hath laid help upon one that is mighty, Christ saves perfectly, thorowly, perpetually, them that come unto him.

The three tongues that were written upon the Cross, in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew, to witness Christ to bee the King of the *Jews*, do each of them in their several Ideoms avouch this Axiome, that Christ is an all-sufficient Saviour, and a threefold

cord

cord is not easily broken. They say it is true of the Oyle at *Rhemes*, that though it be continually spent in the auguration of their Kings of *France*, yet it never wasteth; Christ is that pot of Mannah, that cruse of Oyle, that bottomeless Ocean, that never fails his people; there is in Christ an all-sufficiency, for all Creatures at all times, in all places.

Christ is never *vacuis manibus*, empty-handed.

The great *Cham* is said to have a tree full of pearls hanging by clusters, but what is the great *Cham's* tree, to Christ our tree of Life, who hath all variety and plenty of fruit upon him; the happinesses that comes to beleevers by Christ are so many, that they cannot bee numbred, so great that they cannot bee measured, so copious that they cannot bee defined, so precious that they cannot bee valued, all which speaks out the fulness and all-sufficiency of Christ.

Rev. 22. 2 Christ is like the trees of the sanctuary, which were both for meat and for medicine. Ezek. 47. 12

There is in Christ (*plenitudo abun-*

abundantiæ, and *plenitudo redundantiæ*) a fulneſs of abundance, and a fulneſſe of redundancy, as well as a fulneſs of ſufficiency.

There is in Chriſt.

1 The fulneſs of the ſpirit.

2 The fulneſs of grace.

3 The fulneſs of the Image of God.

4 The fulneſs of the Godhead.

5 The fulneſs of glory.

But I muſt not now open, nor dilate on theſe things, leaſt I ſhould tire both my ſelf, and the Reader,

Plutarch in the Life of *Phocion*, tells us of a certain Gentlewoman of *Jonia*, who ſhewed the wife of *Phocion* all the rich jewels and precious ſtones ſhee had; ſhe anſwered her again, all my riches and jewels is my husband *Phocion*; ſo may a penitent ſinner ſay of his bleſſed Saviour, Chriſt is all my jewels, my riches, my Treaſures, my pleaſures, &c. his ſufficiency is all theſe, and more

more then these to me.

The *Spanish* Ambassadour comming to see the treasury of Saint *Mark* (in *Venice*) which is cryed up thorow-out the World, fell a groping to finde whether it had any bottome, and being asked why, answered in this amongst other things, my great Masters treasure differs from yours, in that his hath no bottome, as I find yours to have, alluding to the Mines in *Mexico*, and *Potosy*: but what are the *Spaniards* Treasures to Christs Treasures; a man may without much groping finde the bottome of all earthly treasures, but who can finde the bottome of Christs treasures? should all created excellencies meet in one glorified breast, yet they could not inable that glorious God-like creature to sound the bottome of those riches and treasures which are in Christ, *Ephes.* 3. 8. All which speaks out Christs all-sufficiency, and thus much for the second thing.

Ipse Deus sufficit ad præmium, Bern.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, If you would be good betimes, then you must know betimes that there is a marvellous willingness & readiness in Christ, to imbrace, to entertain, to welcome returning sinners, and to shew mercy and favour to them. The young Prodigal did but think of returning to his father, and he ran and met him, and instead of kicking or killing him, hee kist him, and imbrac't him; his bowels rolled within him, and his compassions flowed out freely to him. *Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and hee that hath no money, come yee, buy, and eat, yea, come buy wine, and milk, without mony, and without price.* *Nazianzen* improveth this place thus, Oh this easy way of contract, hee giveth more willingly than others sell, if thou wilt but accept, that's all the price, though you have no merits, though you have nothing in your selves to incourage you, yet will you accept? if you

Luk. 15. 20, 21, 22.

Isa. 55. 1 The meaning is, sell thy self, thine own wit, reason, self-worth, and that is all Christ desires, saith *Augustin* upon the words.

you will, all is freely yours; the waters shall be yours to cleanse you, and the milk yours to nourish you, and the bread yours to strengthen you, and the wine yours to comfort you; here poor Sinners are called three times to come; come saith Christ, come, come, to shew how marvellous ready and willing hee is, that poor sinners should taste of Gospel delicates, so in that *John* 7. 37. *Jesus stood and cryed, if any man thirst, let him come to mee and drink*. So in that *Rev.* 22. 17. *Let him that is a thirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely*; so in that *Rev.* 3. 20. *Behold; I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and hee with mee*; and so in that *Luk.* 14. 21. *The Master of the house, said to his Servant, go out quickly into the streets, and lanes of the City, and bring in hither the Poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the*

Cant. 2. 8 Christ comes leaping upon the Mountains, and skipping upon the hills; to shew his readinesse and willingness to do good to souls.

the blinde. Here is no man of quality, of dignity, of worldly pomp, or glory, or of any ſelf-ſufficiency, that is invited to the feaſt, but a company of poor ragged, deformed, ſlighted, neglected, impoveriſhed, wounded ſinners, theſe are invited to feaſt with Chriſt.

Concerning this willingneſs of Chriſt, I ſhall ſpeak more when I come to deal with Old ſinners in the cloſe of this diſcourſe, and to that I refer you, for further and fuller ſatisfaction, concerning the great readineſs and willingneſs of Jeſus Chriſt, to entertain returning Sinners.

Fourthly, If you would bee good betimes, then you muſt know betimes that Jeſus Chriſt is deſigned, ſealed, and appointed by the Father, to the office of a Mediatour. *Labour not for the meat which periſheth, but for that meat which endureth to everlaſting life, which the Son of man ſhall give unto*

John 6. 27 The father ſealed, even God, ſo the Greek hath it.

unto you, for him hath God the father ſealed: God the father hath made Chriſts Commiſſion authentical, as men do theirs by their Seal. It is a metaphor, a ſimile taken from them who give Commiſſions under hand and ſeal. God the father hath given it under his hand and ſeal, that Jeſus Chriſt is the onely perſon that he hath appointed, and ſealed allowed, and confirmed to the office of our redemption. If Jeſus Chriſt were never ſo able to ſave, and never ſo willing, and ready to ſave poor Sinners, yet if hee were not appointed, deſigned, and ſealed, for that work, the awakened Sinner would never look out after him, nor deſire union with him, nor intereſt in him, and therefore it is of very great conſequence to know that God the father hath ſent and ſealed Chriſt to be a Saviour to his people, him hath God the father ſealed; ſealed by way of deſtination, and ſealed by

way

way of qualification, ſealed by his doctrin, ſealed by his miracles, ſealed by his baptiſm, ſealed by his Reſurrection, but above all, ſealed by his glorious unction. *The ſpirit of the Lord is upon mee, becauſe the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tydings unto the meek, hee hath ſent mee to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the Priſon to them that are bound.* To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn, to appoint unto them that mourn in *Zion*, to give unto them beauty for aſhes, the oyle of joy for mourning, the garment of praiſe for the ſpirit of heavineſs, that they might bee called trees of righteouſneſs, the planting of the Lord, that hee might bee glorified, neither Saints, nor Angels, are ſealed and anointed to the great work of redemption, but the Lord

Iſa. 61. 1, 2, 3 Luk. 4. 18 Chriſt was anointed of God, 1 By way of deſignation. 2 By way of Qualification. 3 By way of Inauguration. This annointing was ordinarily uſed in the inſtalling men to offices of any eminence.

Lord Jeſus is, you ſhould always look upon the Lord Jeſus as ſealed and anointed to the Office of a Mediatour, and accordingly plead with him.

Ah Lord! It is thy Office as thou art a ſealed and an anointed Saviour, and Redeemer to ſubdue my ſinnes, to change my nature, to ſanctify my heart, to reform my life, and to ſave my ſoul, and therefore do it for thy names ſake, O do it for thy Office ſake, do it for thy glories ſake. Thou art anointed with the Oile of gladneſs above thy fellows; thou haſt a larger effuſion of the ſpirit upon thee than others, thou art anointed with the Holy-Ghoſt, and with power after an extraordinary meaſure and manner, thou art indued with all Heroical gifts and excellencies, plentifully, abundantly, tranſcendently, thou art ſealed, and predeſtinated, thou art inveſted into this office of Mediatorſhip under the fathers hand and

Pſal. 45. 8
Act. 4. 27
Act. 10. 38
John 1. 16
John 3. 34

and seal, and therefore whether should I go for salvation, for remission, for redemption, for grace, for glory, but to thee?

Fithly, If you would bee good betimes, then you must know betimes, that there is no way to salvation, but by Jesus Christ, neither is there salvation in any other (speaking of Christ) for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved; if ever you are saved, you must bee saved by him, and him onely, you must not look for another Saviour, nor you must not look for a co-saviour, you must be saved wholly by Christ, and onely by Christ, or you shall never be saved; you must cry out as *Lambert* did (when hee was in the fire, and lifted up his hands, and fingers ends flaming) none but Christ, none but Christ. When *Augustus Cæsar* desired the Senate to joyn two Consuls with him for the better government of the State, the

Act. 4. 12 ἐν ἄλλῳ that is by or thorow the mediation of any other.

Act. and Mon.

Suetonius.

the Senate answered, that they held it as a diminution of his dignity, and a disparagement of their own judgement, to joyn any with so incomparable a man as *Augustus*.

Ah Friends, It is a dimiuntion of Christs dignity, sufficiency, and glory, in the business of your salvation, to joyn any thing with the Lord Jesus, and it is the greatest disparagement in the World to your own judgments, knowledge, Prudence, and wisdome, to yoak any with Christ in the work of Redemption, in the business of salvation.

Augustin saith, that *Marcellina* hung Christs picture, and the picture of *Pithagoras* together, many there are not only in *Rome*, but in *England* (yea I am afraid in *London*) who joyn Christ, and their works together, Christ and their Prayers together, Christ and their Teachers together, Christ and their mournings together,

gether, Christ and their hearings together, Christ and their Alms together.

Ah! what a poor, what a weak, what an impotent, what an insufficient Saviour doth these men make Jesus Christ to bee. Except these men come off from these things, and come up onely to Jesus Christ in the great businesse of salvation, they will as certainly, and as eternally perish (notwithstanding their hearing, knowing, and talking much of Christ) as those that never heard of Jesus Christ.

Deut. 22. 11. ch. 19. v. 19

In the Old Testament, God commands them not to wear a Garment of diverse sorts, as of woollen and linnen together. Neither shall a garment mingled of Linnen and woollen come upon thee.

This Law was figurative, and shews us that in the case of our justification, acceptation, and salvation, wee are not to joyn our works, our services, with the

the righteousnes of Christ; God abhors a linsy-woolsy righteousnesse. And as by the Letter of this Law in the Hebrews account, one threed of wool in a Linnen garment, or one Linnen threed in a Woollen garment, made it unlawful; So the least manner of mixture in the businesse of justification, makes all null and void. And if by grace, then it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace; But if it bee of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work; hee that shall mix his Righteousnes with Christs; hee that shall mix his puddle with Christs purple blood, his rags with Christs royal Robes; his copper with Christs Gold, his water with Christs wine, &c. is in the ready way to perish for ever.

Phil. 3. 9, 10
Rev. 19. 8
Gal. 3. 18. c. 2. 16

Rom. 11. 6
Eph. 2. 5
Rom 5. 15, 16, 18

On earth Kings love no consorts, power is impatient of participation. Christ will bee *Alexander* or (*Nemo*) no body, hee

will bee all in all in the businesse of Justification, or hee will bee nothing at all; wee must say of Christ, as it was once said of *Cæsar* (*socium habet neminem*) hee may have a companion, &c. but hee must not have a competitor.

1 Cor. 1.30 Rom. 5.19,20

Let us say of Christ, as the Heathen once said of his Petty gods (*contemno minutulos istos Deos, modo Jovem propitium habeam*) so long as hee had his *Jupiter* to friend, hee regarded them not; So, so long as wee have our Jesus to friend, and his righteousnes and bloud to friend, we should contemn all other things, and abhor the bringing of any thing into competition with him; a real Christian cares not for any thing that hath not (*aliquid Christi*) Something of Christ in it. Hee that holds not wholly with Christ, doth very shamefully neglect Christ; *Aut totum meum tene, aut totum omitte*, saith *Gregory Nazienzen*.

Eph. 3.9,10 Psal. 71.15,16, 19. compared.

There

There is no other name, no other nature, no other blood, no other merits, no other person to bee justified and saved by but Jesus Christ; you may run from Creature to Creature, and from duty to duty, and from Ordinance to Ordinance; and when you have wearied and tyred out your selves in seeking ease and rest, satisfaction and remission, justification and salvation, in one way and another, you will bee forc'd after all to come to Christ, and to cry out, Ah! none but Christ, none but Christ. Ah! none to Christ, none to Christ, no works to Christ, no duties, no services to Christ, no prayers, no tears to Christ, no righteousnesse, no holiness to Christ. Well friends, remember this, that all the tears in the world cannot wipe off (meritoriously) one sin nor all the grace and holiness that is in Angels and men, buy out the pardon of the least transgression. All remission is only by

Isa. 55. 2.
Rom. 10. 3.

the blood of Chriſt.

Sixthly and laſtly, If you would bee good betimes, then you muſt know betimes, that the heart of Jeſus Chriſt is as much ſet upon ſinners now hee is in Heaven, as ever it was when hee was upon earth. Chriſt is not leſſe loving, leſſe mindful, leſs deſirous of ſinners eternal welfare now hee is in Heaven (in a far Country) than hee was when hee lived on earth: witneſſe his continuing the Miniſtery of Reconciliation among poor ſinners, in all ages; witneſſe the conſtant Treatiſe that by his Embaſſadors and Spirit hee ſtill hath with poor ſinners, about the things of their peace, the things of eternity; witneſſe his continual knockings, his continual callings upon poor ſinners by his word, Rod, Spirit, to open, to repent, to lay hold on mercy, and to be at peace with him; witneſs his continual wooing of poor ſinners in the face of all neglects, and put offs, in

2 Cor. 5, 20.

Rev. 3. 20.
Iſa. 56, 4.
Iſa. 27. 5.

Cant 5, 2, 3.
Luk, 14.

in the face of all delaies and denials; in the face of all harsh entertainment and churlish answers; in the face of all gain-sayings and carnal reasonings; in the face of all the scorn and contempt that wretched sinners put upon him; and witnesse that plain word, *Jesus Christ the same, yesterday, and to day, and for ever.* Christ is the same aforetime, in time, and after time, hee is unchangeable in his essence, in his promises, and in his affections. *I am* Alpha *and* Omega, *the beginning and the ending, saith the* Lord, *which is, and which was, and which ie to come.* The phrase is taken from the Greek letters, whereof *Alpha* is the first and *Omega* the last; the first and last letter of the Greek Alphabet is a description of mee, saith Christ, who am before all, and after all, who am above all, and in all, who am unchangeable in my self, and in my thoughts and good-will to poor sinners; therefore do not

Pro. 6. 9. Mat. 22. 4. 23, 37.

Heb. 13. 8.

Re. 1. 8, 11. ch. 21. 6. ch. 22. 13,

It was a custome among the Turks to cry out every morning from an high Tower God alwaies was, and alwaies will bee, and so salute their Mahomet.

poor ſouls, entertain any hard thoughts concerning Jeſus Chriſt, as if hee was leſſe mindful, leſſe pittiful, and leſſe merciful to poor ſouls now hee is in Heaven, than hee was when his abode was in this world: And thus I have gone over thoſe ſix things that you muſt know concerning Chriſt betimes, if ever you would bee good betimes. When Pope *Leo* lay upon his death bed, Cardinal *Bembus* citing a text of Scripture to comfort him, hee replied (*Apage has nugas de Chriſto*) away with theſe bawbles concerning Chriſt; but I hope better things of you, and do deſire that you will ſay of all things below this knowledge of Chriſt (that I have opened to you) as that devout Pilgrim, who travelling to *Jeruſalem*, and by the way viſiting many brave Cities, with their rare monuments, and meeting with many friendly entertainments, would often ſay, I muſt not ſtay here, this

this is not *Jeruſalem*. Ah! ſo do you young men and women, in the midſt of all your worldly delights and contents, cry out, Oh wee muſt not ſtay here, this is not *Jeruſalem*, this is not that knowledge of Chriſt that I muſt have, if ever I am happy here, and bleſſed hereafter.

Fourthly and laſtly, If you would bee good betimes, then you muſt acquaint your ſelves with thoſe that are good betimes; if you would bee gracious in the ſpring and morning of your youth, then you muſt begin betimes to bee much in with them, who are much in with Chriſt, who lye near his heart, and knows much of his mind: *Hee that walketh with wiſe men ſhall bee wiſe, but a companion of fools ſhall bee deſtroyed*, or as the Hebrew hath it, ſhall bee broken in peeces, as when an army is broken and routed by an enemy. (*Holech* from *Halach*) walking with the wiſe, hee ſhall bee wiſe, for

pro. 13. 20.

יְרוֹעַ

Shall be broken, or ſhall be worſe from רוּעַ to be naught.

'Twas the saying of one, as oft as I have been among wicked men, I return home, lesse a man than I was before.

for so the Original hath it; it is not talking with the wise, but walking with the wise that will make you wise; it is not your commending, and praising of the wise, but your walking with the wise, that will make you wise; it is not your taking a few turns with the wise, that will make you wise, but your walking with the wise, that will make you wise; there is no getting much good by them that are good, but by making them your ordinary and constant companions.

Ah friends! you should do as *Joseph* in *Egypt*, of whom the Scriptures saith, *Psal.* 105. 22. (according to the Hebrew phrase) that hee tied the Princes of *Pharaohs* Court about his heart: If ever you would gain by the Saints, you must binde them upon your souls, you must labour to have very near, close, and intimate communion with them. The Jews have a Proverb,

verb, that two drye ſticks put to a green one will kindle it; the beſt way to bee in a flame God-ward, Chriſt-ward, Heaven-ward, and Holineſſe-ward, is to bee among the dry ſticks, the kindle-coals, the Saints, for as live coals kindle thoſe that are dead, ſo lively Chriſtians will heat and enliven thoſe that are dead God-wards, Chriſt-wards, Heaven-wards, and holineſſe-wards. As Iron ſharpeneth Iron, ſo doth the face of a man his friend. Mens wits, parts, gifts, and induſtry, commonly grow more ſtrong, vigorous, and quick, by friendly conference, and communion. And as hee that comes where ſweet ſpices and ointments are ſtirring, carries away a ſweet ſavour with him, ſo hee that converſeth with thoſe that are good, ſhall carry away that goodneſſe and ſweetneſſe with him, that ſhall render him ſweet, deſirable, and delectable to others.

Prov. 27. 17.

Polemon

Arg. Ep. 130.

Polemon that *Augustine* speaks of, who was all for Wine and play, &c. became a brave man when hee came acquainted with the Philosophers School. So many young men, that have been all for Wine and women, for playing and toying, for vanity and folly, have become brave men, precious men, by the company, counsel, and example of those who were gracious. Doctor *Taylor* the Martyr rejoyced that ever hee came into prison, because hee came thither to have acquaintance with that Angel of God, *John Bradford* (as hee calls him,) So doubtlesse many young persons there bee that have much cause to rejoyce, and for ever to blesse the Lord that ever they came acquainted with such and such (who fear the Lord, and who walk in his waies) for the good that they have received by them.

Algerius an *Italian* Martyr said, hee had rather bee in prison

son with *Cato*, than with *Cæsar* in the Senate-house.

Ah young men, young men! you were better bee with the people of God, when they are in the lowest and most contemptible condition, than with the great (wicked) ones of the world, when they are in all their Royalty and glory; in the day of account you will finde that they have made the best Market, who have rather chosen to keep company with *Lazarus*, though in his raggs, then they would (with others) keep company with *Dives*, though in his purple Robes.

Well young men, remember this, cloaths and company do often times tell tales in a mute, but significant language. Tell mee with whom thou goest, and I will tell thee what thou art, saith the Spanish Proverb. *Cicero* (though a Heathen) had rather to have no companion, than a bad one; the Lord grant that this

Moses was of the same mind, and d mettal. Heb. 11. 24, 25, 26, 27.

Those that keep ill company, are like those that walk in the Sun, who are tand infensibly.

this Heathen (and others among them that were of the same minde with him) may never rise up in judgement against any of you, into whose hands this Treatise may fall. And thus I have dispatcht those four things that you must bee acquainted with betimes, (*viz.* the Scripture, your own hearts and conditions, the Lord Jesus Christ, and those that fear him) if ever you would bee good betimes.

Secondly, If you would bee good betimes, if you would seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of your daies, then you must shun the occasions of sin betimes; a man will never begin to bee good, till he begin to decline those occasions that have made him bad, 1 *Thess.* 5. 22. *Abstain from all appearance of evil.* You must shun and be shie of the very appearance of sin, of the very shews and shadows of sin. The word εἶδος, which is ordinarily rendred, *appearance*, signifies

We must shun (*quicquid fuerit male coloratum*) whatsoever looks but ill-favouredly, as Bernard hath it.

ſies kind, or ſort; and ſo the meaning of the Apoſtle ſeems to bee this, *abſtain from all ſort, or the whole kinde of evil*; from all, that is truly ſo, bee it never ſo ſmall. The leaſt ſin is dangerous; *Caſar* was ſtab'd with Bodkins, and many have been eaten up of Mice, and Lice. The leaſt ſpark may conſume the greateſt houſe; the leaſt leak may ſink the greateſt ſhip; the leaſt ſin is enough to undo thy ſoul, and therefore ſhun all the occaſions that leads unto it. *Job* made a covenant with his eyes; *Joſeph* would not bee in the room where his Miſtris was; and *David* (when himſelf) would not ſit with vain perſons. As long as there is fuel in our hearts for a temptation, wee cannot bee ſecure; hee that hath Gunpowder about him, had need keep far enough off from ſparkles; hee that is either tender of his credit abroad, or comfort at home, had need ſhun, and bee

Job 31. 1.
Gen. 39. 10.
Pſa. 26. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

ſhie

ſhie of the very ſhew and ſhadow of ſin; hee that would neither wound conſcience, nor credit, God, nor Goſpel, had need hate the Garment ſpotted with the fleſh. In the Law God commanded his people, not only that they ſhould worſhip no Idol, but that they ſhould demoliſh all the monuments of them, and that they ſhould make no covenant nor affinity with thoſe who worſhiped them, and all, leaſt they ſhould bee drawn by theſe occaſions to commit Idolatry with them; hee that would not taſte of the forbidden fruit, muſt not ſo much as gaze on it; and hee that would not bee bit by the Serpent, muſt not ſo much as parley with the Serpent.

Jude 23.

The ſin, and the coat of the ſin is to be hated, ſaith Ambroſe.

Latet anguis in herba. Snakes are found among Roſes. Num. 6. 3, 4.

It is very obſerveable, that in the Law the Nazarite was not only commanded to abſtain from wine and ſtrong drink, but alſo hee might not eat Grapes, whether moiſt or drie, nor any thing

Quid eſt vitare peccata, niſi vitare occaſiones peccatorum? Melanct.

that

that is made of the Vine tree, from the kernels, even to the husk; but why not theſe ſmall things, in which there could bee no danger of drunkenneſs? ſurely leaſt by the contentment of theſe, hee might bee drawn to deſire the wine, and ſo bee brought on to ſin, to break his vow, (and ſo make work for Hell, or for the Phyſitian of ſouls.) God here by forbidding the moſt remote occaſions, ſhews how wary, and exactly careful men ſhould bee to ſhun, and avoid all occaſions, provocations, and appearances of evil; and indeed wee had need to keep off from ſlippery places, who can hardly ſtand faſt on dry ground; hee that ventures upon the occaſion of ſin, and then prayes, *Lord lead mee not into temptation*, is like him that thruſts his finger into the fire, and then prayes that it may not bee burnt; or like him that is reſolved to quench the fire with oil, which

What is it to avoid ſin, but to avoid the occaſions of ſins?

inſtead of quenching it, is as fuel to feed it, and increaſe it. It was a notable ſaying of one, (*Majus eſt miraculum inter vehementes occaſiones non cadere, quam mortuos ſuſcitare*) it is a greater miracle not to fall, being among ſtrong occaſions, than it is to raiſe up the dead; hee that would not bee defiled muſt not touch pitch, hee that would not bee burnt muſt not carry fire in his boſome, hee that would not eat the Meat, muſt not meddle with the broth, hee that would not fall into the pit, muſt not dance upon the brink; hee that would not feel the blow muſt keep off from the train; *keep thee far from a falſe matter*, Exod. 23.7. Hee that will not flye from the occaſions and allurements of ſin (though they may ſeem never ſo pleaſant to the eye, or ſweet to the taſte) ſhall finde them in the end to bee more ſharp than Vinegar, more bitter than Worm-wood, more

Bernard in Cant. Serm. 65.

Prov. 6. 27, 28, 29.

Nondum tutus eſt, periculo proximus Cypr. Hee is not long ſafe that is near to danger.

more deadly than poiſon.

There is a great truth in that ſaying of the ſon of *Syrach*, *Hee that loveth danger, ſhall periſh therein; hee that will not decline danger, ſhall not bee able to decline deſtruction.* Eccleſ. 3. 26, 27.

Socrates ſpeaks of two young men that flung away their belts, when being in an Idol Temple, the luſtrating water fell upon them, deteſting (ſaith the Hiſtorian) the Garment ſpotted by the fleſh! and will you, O young men play and toy with the occaſions of ſin? the Lord forbid.

There are ſtories of ſeveral Heathens that have ſhun'd and avoided the occaſions of ſin, and will you dare to venture upon the occaſions of ſin?

Alexander would not ſee the woman after whom hee might have luſted.

Scipio Africanus warring in *Spain*, took new *Carthage* by ſtorm, at which time a beautiful and noble Virgin fled to him

for ſuccour, to preſerve her chaſtity, hee being but four and twenty years old (and ſo in the heat of youth) hearing of it, would not ſuffer her to come into his ſight, for fear of a temptation, but cauſed her to bee reſtored in ſafety to her Father.

Aurc. victor.

Dio. in vita.

Livia counſelled her Husband *Auguſtus*, not only not to do wrong, but not to ſeem to do ſo, &c.

Caſar would not ſearch *Pompeyes* Cabinet, leaſt hee ſhould finde new matters of revenge.

Plato mounted upon his horſe, and judging himſelf a little moved with pride, did preſently light from his horſe, leaſt hee ſhould bee overtaken with loftineſs in riding.

Theſius is ſaid to cut off his golden locks, leaſt his enemies ſhould take advantage by taking hold of them.

Ah young men, young men! ſhall the very Heathen thus ſhun and flye from the occaſions of ſin,

ſin, and will not you? will not you, who ſit under the Sun-ſhine of the Goſpel; theſe will in the great day of account bee ſad, and ſore witneſſes againſt thoſe that dally and play with the occaſions of ſin.

To prevent carnal careſulneſs, Chriſt ſends his Diſciples to ſchool, to the irrational Creatures, *Mat.* 6. 26, -- 32. And to prevent your cloſing with the occaſions of ſin, let mee ſend you to ſchool to the like Creatures, that you may learn by them to ſhun and avoid the occaſions of ſin.

The *Sepiæ*, a certain kind of fiſh perceiving themſelves in danger of taking, by an inſtinct which they have, they do darken the water; and ſo many times eſcape the net, which is laid for them.

Geeſe (they ſay) when they flye over *Taurus*, they keep ſtones in their mouthes, leſt by gagling they ſhould diſcover themſelves to the Eagles which are a-

mongst the mountains waiting for them; now if all these considerations put together, will not work you to decline the occasions of sin, I know not what will. There is a truth in that old saying,

Hee that will no evil do,
Must do nothing that belongs
(thereto.

Exod. 22.19. • The *Israelites* must have no leaven in their houses, till the passeover bee done, lest they should bee tempted to eat of it.

Thirdly, If you would bee good betimes, then you must remember the eye of God betimes, if you would seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of your daies, then you must study Gods omnipresence betimes. *Doth not hee see my wayes, and count all my steps; for his eyes are upon the wayes of man, and hee seeth all his goings? There is no dark-*

Psal. 139. 2.-14.

Job 31. 4. ch. 34. 21, 22, &c.

darkneſs, nor ſhadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themſelves.

I have read that *Paphnutius* converted two famous young ſtrumpets, *Thais* and *Ephron*, from uncleanneſs, only with this argument, that God ſeeth all things in the dark, when the doors are faſt, the windows ſhut, and the curtains drawn. By this very Argument *Solomon* labours to take off his young man from carnal and ſinful courſes; *And why wilt thou my Son bee raviſh't with a ſtrange woman, and embrace the boſome of a ſtranger? for the wayes of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and hee pondereth all his goings.* Thou mayeſt deceive all the World, like that counterfit *Alexander* in *Joſephus* his ſtory, but *Auguſtus* will not bee deceived, hee hath quicker and ſharper eyes.

Non ſe putent adulteri noctis tenebris, vel parietum obtegi. Beda.

Pro. 5. 20, 21. *Noli peccare, Deus videt, angeli aſtant. &c.* Take heed what thou doeſt, God beholds thee, Angels obſerve thee.

Ah young men, young men! you may deceive this man and that, and as eaſily deceive your

ſelves, but you cannot deceive him who is (πανόφθαλμος, *totus oculus*) all-eye. As the eyes of a well drawn picture are faſtened upon thee which way ſoever thou turneſt, ſo are the eyes of the Lord. I have read of one, who being tempted to Adultery, ſaid, they could not bee private enough, and being carried from room to room, anſwered, wee are not yet private enough, God is here. Ah friends! his eyes which are ten thouſand times brighter than the Sun, compaſſeth thy words, thy waies, thy works, thy thoughts, thy bed, thy board, thy bench. The *Egyptian* Hieroglyphick for God, was an eye on a Scepter, ſhewing that hee ſees and rules all things.

Jer. 32. 27. ch. 29. 23.

Ah friends! all thoughts, words, hopes, and hearts, are naked, opened, diſſected and quartered before that God, with whom you have to do. God is very curious, and exact in marking and obſerving what is done by

Heb. 4. 13. *Tetrachelismena.*

by men, that he may render to every man according to his works.

Augustin speaks of an old *Comædian*, when having no other spectators, went usually into the Theatre, and acted before the Statues of the Gods. Aug. de civ. Dei. l. 6. c. 10

Ah! Young men, and women, the eye of God should bee more to you than all the World besides; O, that that Scripture might bee written with the pen of a Diamond upon your hearts. *Hear yee not mee* (saith the Lord) *and will you not tremble at my presence?* Jer. 5. 21, 22

There is a great truth in that saying of his (*Magna nobis ex hac indita est probitatis necessitas, quia omnia ante oculos judicis facimus cuncta cernentis,*) A great necessity of goodnesse is from hence put into us, because wee do all things before the eyes of a judge, that sees all things. Boetius de consol. l. 5

Fourthly, If you would bee good betimes, then you must hearken to the voice of Conscience 2 Tim. 1. 3

ence betimes; a man will never beginne to bee good, till hee beginnes to hearken to what Conſcience ſpeaks; So long as a man turns a deaf ear to Conſcience, he is a ſafe priſoner to Satan, and a ſure enemy to good.

Pſal. 58. 4
Ioh. 3. 20, 21

Ah how good might many have been, had they but begunne betimes to hearken to Conſcience?

Ah Young men, do not daily with Conſcience, do not play, do not trifle with Conſcience, do not ſtop your ears againſt Conſcience, hee that will not in his Youth give Conſcience audience, ſhall at laſt bee forced to hear ſuch lectures from conſcience, as ſhall make his life a very hell. A ſleepy Conſcience is like a ſleepy Lyon, when hee awakes hee roars and tears, ſo will conſcience, *Mar.* 9. 22. Conſcience is (*mille teſtes*) a thouſand witneſſes for or againſt a man; hee that hath long turned the deaf ear to Conſcience, ſhall at laſt finde

Such ſhall find Conſcience to be *index, judex, vindex.*

finde his Conſcience like *Prometheus's vulture*, that lyes ever a gnawing. *Judas* found it ſo, and *Spira* found it ſo, and *Blaer* a great Counſellor of *Scotland*, found it ſo.

I have read of one *John Hofmeiſter*, that fell ſick in his Inne, as hee was travelling towards *Auſpurge* in *Germany*, and grew to that horror of Conſcience, that they were fain to bind him in his bed with chains, where hee cryed out, that hee was for ever caſt off by God, and that the promiſes that were ſet before him would do him no good, and all becauſe hee had wounded his Conſcience, and turned a deaf ear to conſcience. Jo. Wolf. lect. memor. To. 2. ad an 1547

Well young men, if you will not betimes hearken to Conſcience, you ſhall at laſt hear Conſcience ſaying to you, as the probationer Diſciple ſaid to Chriſt, *Maſter I will follow thee whither ſoever thou goeſt*; ſo ſaith Conſcience, Sinner I have called up- Mat. 8. 19

upon thee many a thouſand times, and told thee that I muſt by commiſſion, bee thy beſt friend, or thy worſt enemy; but thou wouldeſt not hear, and therefore now I will follow thee, whither ever thou goeſt; faſt, and I will follow thee, and fill thee with horrours, and terrors; feaſt, and I wil follow thee, and ſhew thee ſuch a hand writing upon the wall, as ſhall cauſe thy countenance to change, thy thoughts to bee troubled, the joints of thy loins to bee looſed, and thy knees daſhed one againſt another; ſtay at home, and I will follow thee, from bed to board; go abroad, and I will follow thee into all places and companies; and thou ſhalt know that it is an evil and a bitter thing, that thou haſt ſo often and ſo long neglected my calls, and diſobeyed my voice, and walkt contrary to me; now thou ſhalt finde a truth in that ſaying of *Luther* (*una guttula malæ conſcientiæ totum mare*, &c.) one drop of an evill Conſcience

Dan. 5. 5, 6 *Tolle conſcientiam, tolle omnia.* Take away Conſcience, and take away all, ſaid the Heathen.

ſcience ſwallows up the whole Sea of worldly joy.

Well Young men! There is a day a comming, wherein a good Conſcience will bee better than a good purſe, for then the Judge will not bee put off with a ſuit of Complements, or fair words, nor drawn aſide with hope of reward; and therefore as you would be able to hold up your heads in that day, make conſcience of hearkning to the voice of Conſcience in this your day.

Fifthly, if you would be good betimes, then you muſt know betimes, wherein true happineſſe lyes; for a man will never begin to bee good, till hee begins to underſtand wherein his happineſs conſiſts.

The Philoſophers ſpeaking of happineſs, were divided into two hundred eighty eight opinions, every one intending ſomething, and yet reſolving nothing. Therefore the man in *Plutarch*, hearing them wrangle about mans

Quot homines tot ſententiæ, ſo many men, ſo many minds

(*ſum-*

(*Summum bonum*) chiefest good; one placing it in this, and another in that, hee went to the market and bought up all that was good, hoping among all he should not miss of it, but he did; many look for happiness in sinne, others look for it in the Creatures, but they must all say it is not in us, (*Nil dat quod non habet*) nothing can give what it hath not, if the Conduit Pipe hath no water, it can give no water; if a man hath no money, he can give no mony; if the Creatures have no happiness, they can give no happiness; Now this jewel, this pearl, happiness, is not to bee found in the breast, in the bosome of creatures, in a word, because I must hasten to a close, mans happiness lys,

Isa. 56. 12
Job 28. 14

First, In his communion with God? as experience and Scripture demonstrates. Happy is that people, that is in such a case (but give mee that word again) yea, happy is that people, whose God is the Lord. A man whose soul

Psal. 144. 15

ſoul is in communion with God, ſhall finde more pleaſure in a deſert, in a dungeon, in a den, yea, in death, than in the Palace of a Prince; than in all worldly delights, and contents, &c.

Secondly, In pardon of Sin; *Bleſſed is hee whoſe tranſgreſſion is forgiven, whoſe Sinne is covered. Bleſſed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whoſe ſpirit there is no guile.* It is not bleſſed is the honourable man, but bleſſed is the pardoned man; it is not bleſſed is the rich man, but bleſſed is the pardoned man; it is not bleſſed is the learned man, but bleſſed is the pardoned man; it is not bleſſed is the politick man, but bleſſed is the pardoned man; it is not bleſſed is the victorious man, but bleſſed is the pardoned man; Do with me what thou wilt, ſince thou haſt pardoned my ſins, ſaith *Luther.* Pſal. 32. 1, 2

Thirdly, In a compleat fruition and enjoyment of God, when wee ſhall be here no more. *Bleſſed*

Mat. 5. 8 *ſed are the pure in heart, for they ſhall ſee God.* Now they ſee him

1 Cor. 13. 12 but darkly, but in heaven they ſhall ſee him face to face, they ſhall know as they are known; but of theſe things I have ſpoken largely elſewhere, and therefore ſhall ſatisfy my ſelf with theſe hints.

Laſtly, If you would be good betimes, then you muſt break your covenant with ſin betimes, you muſt fall out with your luſts betimes; you muſt arme and fence your ſelves againſt Sin be-

Iſa. 28, 15. 18 times; a man never beginnes to fall in with Chriſt, till hee beginnes to fall out with his Sins, till ſin and the ſoul bee two, Chriſt and the ſoul cannot be one; Now to work your hearts to this, you ſhould alwayes look upon ſin under theſe notions:

Firſt, If you would have the league diſſolved betwixt ſin and your ſouls betimes, then look upon ſin under the notion of an enemy betimes.

Dearly

Dearly beloved, I beſeech you as ſtrangers and Pilgrims, abſtain from fleſhly luſts, which warre againſt the ſoul. As the Viper is killed by the young ones in her belly; ſo are poor Sinners betraied and killed by their own luſts, that are nouriſhed in their boſomes.

1 Pet. 2. 11 Sins eſpecially againſt knowledge (are *peccata vulnerantia et diuaſtantia*) wounding and waſting.

Pittacus a Philoſopher, challenging *Phlyon* the *Athenian* Captain (in their warres againſt them) to ſingle combate, carried a net privily, and ſo caught him, and overcame him; So doth Sin with poor Sinners, the dangerous, pernicious malignant nature of Sinne, you may ſee in the ſtory of the *Italian*, who firſt made his Enemy deny God, and then ſtabbed him to the heart, and ſo at once murdered both body, and ſoul. Sin betrayes us into the hand of the Devil, as *Dalilah* did *Sampſon* into the hands of the *Philiſtims*.

Sugred poyſons go down pleaſantly; Oh! But when they are

down, they gall and gnaw, and gripe the very heart-strings asunder, it is so with sin; Ah! Souls have not you often found it so?

When *Phocas* the Murderer, thought to secure himself by building high-walls, he heard a voice from heaven telling him, that though he built his bulwarks ever so high, yet Sinne within, would soon undermine all.

Ambrose reports of one *Theotimus*, that having a disease upon his body, the Physitian told him, that except hee did abstain from intemperance, Drunkennesse, Uncleannesse, he would loose his eyes; his heart was so desperately set upon his Sins, that he crys out, then (*vale lumen amicum*) farewel sweet light.

Ah! how did his lusts warre both against body and soul.

The Old man is like a treacherous friend, and a friendly Traitour; though it be a harder thing

thing to fight with a mans lusts, than it is to fight with the Crosse; yet you must fight or dye, if you are not the death of your Sins, they will prove the death of your souls.

The Oracle told the *Cirrhæans* (*diesque belli gerendum*) they could not be happy unless they waged warre night and day; no more can wee, except wee live and dye fighting against our lusts.

As one of the Dukes of *Venice* dyed fighting against the *Naurattines* with his weapons in his hand.

Ah Young men! Can you look upon Sin under the notion of an enemy, and not break with it, and not arm against it?

Well, remember this, the pleasure and sweetnes that follows victory over sin, is a thousand times beyond that seeming sweetnesse that is in sin, and as victory over sin is the sweetest victory, so it is the greatest victory, there is no conquest to that which is gotten over a mans own corruptions. *He that is slow to*

anger, is better than the mighty, and hee that ruleth his ſpirit, than hee that taketh a City. It is noble to overcome an enemy without, but it is more noble to overcome an enemy within; it is honourable to overcome fiery flames, but it is far more honourable to overcome fiery luſts.

When *Valentinian* the Emperour was upon his dying-bed, among all his victories only one comforted him, and that was victory over his worſt enemy, *viz.* his own naughty heart.

Rom. 7. 22, 23
2 Cor. 10. 3, 4, 5, 6.
Gal. 5. 17.

Ah young men, young men! your worſt enemies are within you, and all their plots, deſigns, and aſſaults are upon your ſouls, your moſt noble part; they know if that fort Royal bee won, all is their own, and you are undone, and ſhall bee their ſlaves for ever: and therefore it ſtands you upon, to arm your ſelves againſt theſe inbred enemies, and if you ingage Chriſt in the quarrel, you will carry the day, and when

when you shall lye upon your dying-beds, you will then finde that there is no comfort to that, which ariseth from the conquests of your own hearts, your own lusts.

Secondly, If you would break covenant with sin, if you would arme and fence your selves against sin betimes, then look upon sin as the souls bonds, for as bonds tie things together, so doth sin tie the sinner, and the curse together, it bindes the sinner and wrath together, it links the sinner and hell together. I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitternesse, and in the bond of iniquity; iniquity is a chain, a bond; now bonds and chains gall the body, and so do sin the soul, and as poor captives are held fast in their chains, so are sinners in their sins; they cannot redeem themselves by price, nor by power.

2 Pet. 3. 6. Gal. 3. 10. Joh. 8. 34.

2 Tim. 2. ult.

Ah young men, young men! no bondage to soul-bondage, no

ſlavery to ſoul-ſlavery; the *Iſraelites* bondage under *Pharaoh*, and the Chriſtians bondage under the *Turks*, is but the bondage of the body, of the baſer and ignoble part of man, but yours is ſoul-bondage, ſoul-ſlavery, which is the ſaddeſt and greateſt of all.

Auguſtine ſaith of Rome, that ſhee was the great Miſtriſs of the world, and the great drudge of ſin.

Ah friends! You ſhould never look upon your ſins, but you ſhould look upon them as your bonds; yea as the worſt bonds that ever were; all other chains are golden chains, chains of Pearl, compared to thoſe chains of Iron and Braſſe; thoſe chains of luſts with which you are bound. Ah! who can thus look upon his chains, his ſins, and not loathe them, and not labour for freedome from them? *Juſtinus* the Emperours Motto was (*Libertas res ineſtimabilis*) liberty is unvaluable; if civil liberty bee, ſurely ſpiritual liberty is much more; if you ask ſouls that were once in a ſtate of bondage, but

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are now Christs free-men, they will tell you so.

It was a good observation of *Chrysostome*, that *Joseph* was the free-man, and his Mistrisse was the servant, when shee was at the beck of her own lusts, when shee tempted, and hee refused. Such as live most above sin and temptation are the greatest free-men, others that live under the power of their lusts, are but slaves, and in bonds, though they dream and talk of freedome, *Tit.* 3. 3.

Chrysost. *Hom.* 19. *in prior. Epist. ad Corinth.*

Thirdly, If you would break league with sin, and arm and fence your selves against it, then look alwayes upon sin under the notion of fire. And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire. Oh! snatch them out of their sins, as you would snatch a child, a friend out of the fire; or as the Angel snatch't *Lot* out of *Sodom*, hastily, and with a holy violence; natural fire may burn the house, the

Jude 23. *Arpazontes* signifies a violent snatching, as the tender-hearted Mother to save the life of her child pulls it hastily, and with violence out of the fire.

goods, the treasure, the servant, the child, the wife, the body, but this fire burns the soul, it destroies and consumes that noble part, which is more worth than all the treasures of a thousand worlds; every man hath a hand, and a heart to quench the fire which burns his neighbours house, but few men have either hands or hearts to quench the fire that burns their neighbors souls, this is, and this shall bee for a lamentation.

D. Denisons threefold resolution. part. 2. Sect. 2.

I have read of one, who upon the violence of any temptation to sin, would lay his hand on burning coals, and being not able to abide it, would say to himself, Oh how unable shall I be to indure the pains of hell? and this restrained him from evil; but what is the fire of hell, to the fire of sin; now to provoke you to look upon sin under the notion of fire, consider with mee the sundry resemblances between material, & immaterial fire, between corporal common fire, and between this spiritual fire. Sin, As First,

First, Fire is terrible and dreadful; a ſhip on fire, a houſe on fire, Oh how dreadful is it! ſo ſin ſet home upon the conſcience is exceeding terrible and dreadful. *Mine iniquity* (ſo the Hebrew) *is greater than I can bear*; ſin or iniquity is often put for the puniſhment of ſin, by a Metonymie of the efficient for the effect; for ſin is the natural Parent of puniſhment. *Mine iniquity* ſaith *Cain*, *is ſo great, and lies ſo heavy, ſo terrible and dreadful upon my conſcience, that it cannot bee forgiven*; and thus by his diffidence, hee ſtabs two at once, the mercy of God, and his own ſoul. So *Judas*, *I have ſinned, in that I have betrayed innocent blood*, and hee went and hanged himſelf. As there is no fighting with a mighty fire, ſo there is no bearing up, when God ſets home ſin upon the conſcience; a man will then chuſe ſtrangling, or hanging, rather than living under ſuch wounds and laſhes of con-

Gen. 4. 13. *Mentiris Cain*, thou lyeſt *Cain*, ſaith one on the Text.

Mat. 27. 3, 4, 5.

conſcience. Hiſtories abounds with inſtances of this nature, but I muſt haſten to a cloſe.

2 Sam. 12. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.

Secondly, Fire is moſt dangerous and pernicious when it breaks forth of the chimny, or of the houſe, ſo it is with ſin. Sin is bad in the eye, worſe in the tongue, worſer in the heart, but worſt of all in the life. Fire, when out of its proper place, may do much hurt in the houſe, but when it flames abroad, then it doth moſt miſchief to others; Sin in the heart may undo a man, but ſin in the life may undo others, as well as a mans ſelf.

Job 31. 1. Prov. 4. 23. Epheſ. 5. 15.

Set a guard upon thy eye, a greater upon thy heart, but the greateſt of all upon thy life.

Salvianus de G. D. l. 4.

Salvian relates how the Heathen did reproach ſome Chriſtians, who by their lewd lives made the Goſpel of Chriſt to be a reproach; where (ſaid they) is that good Law which they do beleeve? where are thoſe rules of

of godlinesse which they do learn? they read the holy Gospel, and yet are unclean; they hear the Apostles writings, and yet are drunk, they follow Christ, and yet disobey Christ, they professe a holy Law, and yet do lead impure lives.

But the lives of other Christians have been so holy, that the very Heathens observing them have said, surely this is a good God, whose servants are so good. It is brave when the life of a Christian is a commentary upon Christs life. One speaking of the Scripture, saith (*verba vivenda, non legenda*) they are words to bee lived, and practised, not read only. *Augustin.* A Heathen adviseth us to demean our selves, so circumspectly, as if our enemies did alwaies behold us. *Plutarch.* And saith another, for shame, either live as Stoicks, or leave off the name of stoicks. *Epictetus.* Sirs, live as Christians, or lye down the name of Christians.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Fire hardens, it makes the weak and limber clay to become ſtiff and ſtrong for the Potters uſe. So ſin hardens, it hardens the heart againſt the commands of God, the calls of Chriſt, and the wreſtlings of the Spirit. As you ſee in *Pharaoh*, the *Jews*, and moſt that are under the ſound of the Goſpel. Ah! how many hath this fire (ſin) hardened in theſe daies, by working them to ſlight ſoul-ſoftening means, and by drawing them to entertain hardening-thoughts of God, and to fall in with ſoul-hardening company, and ſoul-hardening Principles, and ſoul-hardening examples, of hardened and unſenſible ſinners; one long ſince thus complained that they did (*patientius ferre Chriſti jacturam, quam ſuam*) more calmly paſſe by the injuries done to Chriſt, than thoſe which are done unto themſelves; this age is full of ſuch hardened unſenſible ſouls.

Jer. 5. 3. ch. 19. ult. Iſa. 9. 13.

Jer. 2. 25. ch. 18. 12.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, Fire is a lively active element, ſo is ſin. Ah how lively and active was this fire in *Abraham*, *David*, *Job*, *Peter*, *Paul*, and other Saints? though Chriſt by his death hath given it its mortal wound; yet it lives, and is, and will be active in the deareſt Saints. Though ſin and grace were not born together, neither ſhall they dye together; yet while beleevers live in this world, they muſt live together. There is a Hiſtory that ſpeaks of a Fig-tree that grew in a ſtone wall, and all means was uſed to kill it, they cut off the branches, and it grew again, they cut down the body, and it grew again, they cut it up by the root, and ſtill it lived, and grew untill they pulled down the ſtone-wall; till death ſhall pull down our ſtone-walls; Sin will live, this fire will burn.

Gen. 22.
Pſal. 51.
Job 3.
Mat. 26.
Rom. 1. 15, &c.

Iſodore the Monk was very much out, who vaunted that hee had felt in himſelf no motion to ſin forty years together.

Wee may ſay of ſin, as ſome ſay of Cats, that they have many lives; kill them and they will live

live again, kill them again, and they will live again; so kill sin once, and it will live again, kill it again, and it will live again, &c. Sin oftentimes is like that Monster *Hydra* cut off one head, and many will rise up in its room.

Fifthly, Fire is of a penetrating nature, it peirceth and windeth it self into every corner and chinck, and so doth sin winde it self into our thoughts, words, and works; it will winde it self into our understandings, to darken them; and into our judgements, to pervert them; and into our wills, to poison them; and into our affections, to disorder them; and into our consciences, to corrupt them; and into our carriages, to debase them. Sin will winde it self into every duty, and every mercy, it will winde it self into every one of our enjoyments and concernments.

Isa. 1. 5, 6. Rom. 7. 13. 17. Sin is (*malum Catholicum*) A Catholick evil (*Quodcunque in peccato, peccatum est*) whatsoever is in sin, is sin.

Hannibal having overcome the *Romans*, put on their armour

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on his ſhoulders, and ſo by that policy they being taken for *Romans*, won a City; but what are *Hannibals* wiles, to ſins wiles, or Satans wiles? if you have a minde to bee acquainted with their wiles, look over my Treatiſe called *Precious Remedies againſt Satans Devices.*

Sixthly and laſtly, Fire is a devouring, a conſuming Element, it turns all fuel into aſhes; It is a Woolf that eats up all, ſo Sin is a fire that devours and conſumes all, it turned *Sodom* and *Gomorah* into aſhes, it hath deſtroyed the *Caldæan*, *Perſian*, and *Gracian* Kingdomes, and will at laſt deſtroy the *Roman* Kingdome alſo; this Woolf ate up *Sampſons* ſtrength, *Abſoloms* beauty, *Achitophels* policy, and *Herods* glory, &c. It hath drowned one world already, and will at laſt burn another, even this. Oh the hopes, the hearts, the happineſſe, the joyes, the comforts, the ſouls that this fire (Sin) hath con-

Pſal. 21. 9.

2 Pet. 2. 5, 6. Pro. 6. 32. Eccleſ. 9. 18. Prov. 13. 13. ch. 20. 29. 1. Pro. 11. 3. ch. 15. 25. ch. 21. 7

consumed and destroyed! &c.

Peter Camois Bishop of Betty in France, in his draught of Eternity, *Num.* 75. tells us that some devout personages caused those words of the Prophet *Isaiah* (to bee written in letters of gold upon their chimny peeces) *Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?* Isa. 33. 14.

Ah young men, young men! I desire that you may alwaies look upon sin under the notion of fire, yea as such fire as laies the foundation for everlasting fire, for everlasting burnings, and this may work when other things will not.

I have read of a grave and chaste Matron, who being moved to commit folly with a lew'd Russian, after some discourse, shee call'd for a pan of burning coals, requesting him for her sake to hold his finger in them but one hour, hee answered, it is

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an unkind requeſt, to whom ſhe replyed, that ſeeing hee would not do ſo much as to put one finger upon the coals for one hour, ſhe could not yeild to do that, for which ſhee ſhould bee tormented both body and ſoul in hell fire for ever. The application is eaſy, &c.

Fourthly, If you would break with Sin betimes, if you would arm againſt Sin in the ſpring and morning of your dayes, then you ſhould look upon Sin under the notion of a Thief, and indeed Sin is the greateſt Theif, the greateſt Robber in the World, it robbed the Angels of all their glory, it robbed *Adam* of his Paradiſe, and felicity, and it hath robbed all the Sons of *Adam* of five precious Jewels, the leaſt of which was more worth than heaven and earth.

2 Pet. 2. 4
Gen. 3

1 It hath robbed them of the holy and glorious Image of God, which would have been fairly engraven upon them, had

Adam ſtood, &c.

2 It hath robbed them of their ſon-ſhip, and of ſons have made them ſlaves.

Well did one of the fathers call Pride and Vain-glory the ſweet ſpoiler of ſpiritual excellencies, and a pleaſant theif

3 It hath robbed them of their friendſhip, and made them enemies.

4 It hath robbed them of their communion and fellowſhip with Father, Son, and Spirit, and made them Strangers and Aliens.

5 It hath robbed them of their glory, and made them vile and miſerable. It hath robbed many a nation of the Goſpel, and many a pariſh of many a happy guide; and many a Chriſtian of the favour of God, the joyes of the ſpirit, and the Peace of Conſcience.

Oh the health, the wealth, the honor, the friends, the relations, that Sin hath robbed thouſands of.

Nay, It hath robbed many of their gifts, their arts, their parts, their memory, their judgement;

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yea their very reaſon, as you may ſee in *Pharaoh*, *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Belſhazzar*, *Achitophel*, *Haman*, *Herod*, and thoſe *Babyloniſh* Princes that accuſed *Daniel*. And ſo in *Menippus* of *Phenicia*, who having loſt his goods, ſtraugled himſelf. And ſo *Dinarcus Phidon* at a certain loſſe; cut his own throat to ſave the charge of a cord. And ſo *Auguſtus Caſar* (in whoſe time Chriſt was born) was ſo troubled and aſtoniſhed at the relation of an overthrow from *Varrus*, that for certain months together, he let the hair of his beard and head grow ſtill, and wore it long; yea and other whiles would run his head againſt the doors, crying out *Quintilius Varrus*, deliver up my Legions again; by all which, it is moſt apparent, that Sin is the greateſt thief in all the World. Oh then who would not break league and covenant with it, and be ſtill in preſſing of God, to do juſtice upon it? &c. Suetonius.

Nah. 1. 1
Hab. 1. 1
Mal. 1 1

Fifthly, If you would break with Sin, and arm and fence your selves against Sin betimes, then you must look upon sinne under the notion of a burden betimes; and indeed sin of all burdens is the heaviest burden in all the world. Innumerable evils have compassed me about, mine

Psal 40. 12

iniquities have taken hold upon mee; so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of my head, therefore my heart faileth me; and again,

Psal 38 4

Mine iniquities are gone over my head (saith the same person) as an heavy burden, they are too heavy for mee to bear. Sin is a

Heb. 12. 1

weight that easily besets poor souls, it is a burden that so troubles them, and puzzles them, that so curbs them, and girds them, that so presses and oppresses them, as that it wrings many

Rom. 7. 13. ult.

bitter tears from their eyes, and many sad and grievous sighs and groans from their hearts.

Again, As Sin is a burden to

Christi-

Chriſtians, ſo it is a burden to heaven, it made heaven weary to bear the Angels that fell; no ſooner had they ſinned, but heaven groans to be eaſed of them; and it never left groaning till juſtice had turned them a groaning to hell. Jud. 6

Again, as Sin is a burden to Heaven, ſo it is a burden to the earth, witneſs her ſwallowing up, *Korah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, their Wives, children, Goods, ſervants, &c. Ah! Sinners your ſins makes the very earth to groan; they make the earth weary of bearing you. Oh! How doth the earth groan and long to ſwallow up thoſe earthly wretches, whoſe hopes, whoſe hearts are buried in the earth, theſe ſhall have little of heaven, but enough of earth when they come to dye. Numb. 16. 26. 35.

Cornelius Alapide, tells a ſtory, that he heard of a famous Preacher, who ſhewing the bondage of the Creature, brings in the Rom. 8. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23

Creature complaining thus; Oh! that wee could serve such as are Godly; Oh! that our substance and our flesh, might bee incorporated into godly people, that so wee might rise into glory with them; Oh! that our flesh might not bee incorporated into the flesh of sinners, for if it bee, we shall go to hell, and would any creatures go to hell? Oh! we are weary of bearing sinners, wee are weary of serving of sinners; thus the creatures groan, thus the creatures complain, the Sinners sins forcing them to it, &c.

Amos. 2. 13

Again, Sin is a burden to God, *Behold I am pressed under you, as a cart is pressed that is full of sheaves*, by this plain pithy countrey comparison, God shews how sadly hee is pressed and oppressed, how sorely hee is wearied and tired with those peoples Sins; Divine patience is even worn out; Justice hath lift up her hand, and will bear with them no longer. God seems to groan

groan under the preſſure of their Sinnes, as a Cart ſeems to do under a heavy load; of this God complains by the Prophet *Iſaiah*, *Thou haſt made me to ſerve with thy ſins, thou haſt wearied mee with thine iniquities.* I am as weary of your Sins, as a Travelling woman is weary of her pains, ſaith God. Sin was ſuch a burden to God, that he ſweeps it off with a ſweeping Floud, *Gen.* 7. &c. Iſa.43.24

Again, Sin is a burden to Chriſt, it made him ſweat, as never man ſweat; it made him ſweat great drops of clotted or congealed bloud; Sin put Chriſts whole body into a bloudy ſweat, it made him groan pittiouſly when he bare our Sins in his body on the Tree. Sin made his ſoul heavy even to the death, and had he not been one that was mighty, yea, that was all-mighty, he had fainted and failed under his burthen. And thus you ſee what a burthen Sin is, to man, to Luk.22.44 A ſtrange watering of a garden. Bern. 1 Pet.2.24 Iſa.6.6

the Creatures, to heaven, to earth, to God, to Christ; and therefore as you would break with Sin betimes, look alwayes upon it as a burden, yea, as the greatest and heaviest burden in all the world, &c.

Sixthly and Lastly, If you would break Covenant with Sin, and arm, and fence your selves against it betimes, then you must look upon it betimes under the notion of a Tyrant, and indeed Sin is the worst and greatest Tyrant in the world. Other Tyrants can but Tyranize over our bodies, but Sin is a Tyrant that tyranizes over both body and soul, as you may see in the sixth and seventh of the *Romans*, Sin is a Tyrant that hath a kinde of jurisdiction in most mens hearts; it sets up the Law of Pride, the Law of Passion, the Law of Oppression, the Law of Formality, the Law of Hypocrisy, the Law of Carnality, the Law of Self-love, the Law of Carnal-Reason, the

Tit. 3 3

the Law of unbeleef, and ſtrictly Commands, Subjection to them, and proclaims fire and ſword to all that ſtand out; this Saints, and ſinners, good men and bad, do ſufficiently experience.

Sin is a Tyrant of many thouſand years ſtanding, and though it hath had many a wound, and many a foil, and received much oppoſition, yet ſtill it playes the Tyrant all the World over. O! the hearts that this Tyrant makes to ake, the ſouls that this Tyrant makes to bleed.

Thales one of the ſeven Sages, uſed to ſay that few Tyrants lived to be old; but it is far otherwiſe with this Tyrant Sin. Prov. 4.16

Pharoahs Tyranny was nothing to Sins Tyranny, this Tyrant will not ſo much as ſuffer his ſlaves to ſleep. They ſleep not except they have done miſchief; & their ſleep is taken away, unleſs they cauſe ſome to fall. The wicked are like the troubled ſea, when it cannot reſt, whoſe waters caſt up mire and dirt. *There is no peace to the wicked*, ſaith my God. Iſa. 57.20,21.

Other Tyrants have been brought down, and brought under

der by a humane power, but this cannot, but by a divine; the power of man hath brought down many of the Tyrants of this World; but it is onely the power of Christ, that can bring down this Tyrant, that can cast down his strong holds, 2 *Cor.* 10. 3, 4, 5, 6, &c. therefore ingage Christ in the conflict, draw him into the battle, and in the end the conquest will be yours.

Vitellius, who had been Emperor of all the World, yet was driven thorow the streets of *Rome* stark naked, and thrown into the River *Tyber*, &c.

Andronicus the Emperor, for his cruelty towards his People, was by them at last shamefully deposed, and after many contumelies hanged up by his heels.

Ptolomy was put on a Cross. *Bajazet* in an iron Cage. *Phoras* broken on the Wheel. *Lycam* cast to the Dogs (as well as *Jezabel.*) *Attales* thrust into a Forge. King *Gath* into a Beer-barrel, &c.

But

But none of these that have tameed these Tyrants, that have brought down these mighty *Nimrods*, have been able to tame, to bring under the Tyrants, the sins, the lusts, that hath been in their own bosomes; many a man hath had a hand in bringing down of worldly Tyrants, who notwithstanding have dyed for ever by the hand of a Tyrant within, &c.

And thus much for the directions that young men must follow, if they would bee good betimes, if they would seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of their dayes. I shall now give some brief Answers to the Young mans Objections, and the Old mans scruples, and so close up this discourse.

Ob. But some young men may object and say; you would have us to bee good betimes, and to seek and serve the Lord in the Prime-rose of our dayes, but it may be time enough hereafter to fol-

follow this Counſel; wee are young, and it may bee time enough for us to minde theſe things hereafter, when wee have ſatisfied the fleſh ſo and ſo, or when wee have got enough of the world, and laid up ſomething that will ſtand us in ſtead, and that may oil our joynts when wee are old. Now

To this Objection I anſwer.

Firſt, That it is the greateſt folly and madneſſe in the world to put off God, and the great things of eternity with may-bees, what Trades-man, what Merchant, what Marriner ſo mad, ſo fooliſh, ſo blockiſh, as to put off a preſent ſeaſon, a preſent opportunity of profit and advantage upon the account of a may-bee? It may bee I may have as good a ſeaſon, it may bee I ſhall have as golden an opportunity to get, and to inrich my ſelf as this is; and therefore farewell to this. No men that are in their right minds will argue

argue thus; and why then should you especially in the things that are of an everlasting concernment to you?

I have read of one *Monarcho* a frantick *Italian*, who thought that all the Kings of the Earth were his Vassals, and as frantick are they, who wilfully neglect present seasons of grace, upon the account of a future may-bee, &c.

Secondly, I answer, it may bee if thou neglectest this present season, and opportunity of grace, thou mayest never have another; it may bee mercy may never knock more, if thou dost not now open; it may bee Christ shall never bee offered to thee more, if now thou dost not close with him, and accept of him; it may bee the Spirit will never strive more with thee, if now thou dost resist him, and withstand him; it may bee a pardon shall never bee offered to thee more, if now thou wilt not take it;

Young men, if you will but go into burial places, you shall finde graves exactly of your length.

it; it may bee the Goſpel ſhall never ſound more in thy ears, if now thou wilt not hear it; now ſet one may-bee againſt another may-bee, ſet Gods may-bee againſt thine own may-bee, but

Thirdly, Doubtleſſe there are many thouſand thouſands now in Hell, who have pleaſed themſelves, and put off God, and the ſeaſons of grace with a may-bee, hereafter may bee time enough. It may bee when I have gratified ſuch a luſt, and when I have treaſured up ſo much of the world, I will return and ſeek, and ſerve the Lord, but before ever this ſeaſon or opportunity came, juſtice hath cut the threed of their lives, and they are now miſerable for ever; and now they are ſtill a curſing themſelves, becauſe they have ſlipt their golden opportunities upon the account of a may-bee, &c. But

It was an unſpeakable vexation to King *Lyſimachus*, that his ſtaying to drink one draught of water loſt him his Kingdome.

Fourthly and laſtly, This putting off of God, and the preſent ſeaſons

seasons of grace with a may-bee, is very provoking to God, as you may see if you will but read from the 20. *verse* to the 33. of the first of *Proverbs*. Nothing stirs and provokes a Master more, than his servants putting off his service, or his commands with a may-bee; it may bee I will, it may bee I may do this and that, nothing puts a Master sooner into a heat, a flame, than this; nor nothing puts God more into a flame than this, as you may see by comparing *Psal.* 95. *ver.* 6. to the end; with that 3. of the *Hebrews* and the 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. read the words, and tremble at the thought of a may-bee, at the thoughts of putting off of God, and the seasons of grace.

I have read of two, who cut off their right hand one for another, and then made it an excuse, a put off, they were lame, and so could not serve in the Gallies of *Francis* the first, King of *France*, but

but this practise of theirs did so insense and provoke the King, that hee sent them both to the Gallows. I suppose the reader is not so young, but knows how to apply it.

Object. *If I should begin to bee good betimes, and to seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of my daies, I should lose my friends, I should lose their favour, for they are carnal and worldly, and had rather I should seek after gold, than God, the Creature, than Christ, Earth, than Heaven, &c.*

Now to this I answer, Surely you are out, for

First, This is the high way, the ready way to gain the best, the surest, and the soundest friends. *When a mans waies please the Lord, hee maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.* When a man falls in with God, God will work the Creatures to fall in with him. *Joseph* found it so, and *Jacob* found it so, and *Job* found it so, the three Children found

Prov. 16. 7.

Job 5. 23,--28.

found it so, and *Daniel* found it so, as you all know that have but read the Scripture. And many in this age (as bad as it is) have found that the best way to make friends, is first, to make God our friend. Ah young men, young men! you shall not lose your friends (by seeking and serving of the Lord in the spring and morning of your daies) but only exchange bad ones for good ones, the worst for the best; hee that gives up himself betimes to the Lord, shall have God for his friend, and Christ for his friend, and the Angels for his friends, and the Saints for his friends; Christ will bee to such, First, An omnipotent friend. Secondly, An omniscient friend. Thirdly, An omnipresent friend. Fourthly, An indeficient friend. Fifthly, An independant friend. Sixthly, An immutable friend. Seventhly, A watchful friend. Eighthly, A loving friend.

Luk. 15. 7. 10.
Isa. 6. 7, 8, 9.
Heb. 4 13.
Isa. 59. 16, 17
Isa. 44. 24,
Mal. 3. 6.
Psa. 121. 4, 5.

Nincthly, A faithful friend.

1 John 4.16
Tit 1.2.
Isa.63.9

Tenthly, A compassionate friend. Eleventhly, A close friend. There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother, *Prov.* 18.24. such a friend is Christ, and such a friend is as ones own soul, a rare happiness, hardly to bee matcht. Twelfthly, An universal friend, a friend in all cases, and a friend in all places. Christ is so a friend to every one of his, as if he were a friend to none besides; hence it is that they say, not onely our Lord our God, but my Lord, and my God. Christ is such an universal friend, as that he supplies the place, and acts the part of every friend.

Luk. 1.43
John 20.28
Phil. 4.19

Thirteenthly, He is our first friend, *Psal.* 90.1. before we had a friend in all the World, he was our friend, *Prov.* 8.21.

John 13.1
Alexander the Great cannot cut that knot of friendship that is tyed betwixt Christ and his.

Lastly, He is a constant friend, whom he loves hee loves to the end.

Augustus Cæsar would not suddenly entertain a league of friendship with any, but was a con-

constant friend to those hee loved (*Amare nec cito desisto, nec temere incipio*) late ere I love, as long ere I leave; Where Christ begimnes to love, he always loves. *Jer.* 31. 3. *I have loved thee with an everlasting love*; Now who would not venture the loss of all friends in the world, to gain such a friend as this is?

Ah! Young men, and women, let mee say to you what *Seneca* said to his friend *Polibius* (*Fas tibi non est de fortuna conqueri, salvo Cæsare*) never complain of thy hard fortune, as long as *Cæsar* is thy friend; so say I, never complain of your loss of Friends, so long as by loosing of them, you gain Christ to be your friend.

Secondly, Thou were't better be without their friendship and favour, than to enjoy it upon any sinful and unworthy accounts, thou were't better run the hazard of loosing thy friends, and their favour, by seeking and

ſerving the Lord in the Prime-roſe of thy dayes, then to run the hazard of loſing God, Chriſt, heaven, eternity, and thy ſoul for ever, by neglecting the things of thy peace.

Mat. 16.26
Mark. 8.36

It was a gallant return which the noble *Rutilius* made his friend, requeſting of him an unlawfull favour, in ſuch language as this, I had as good bee without ſuch a friend, as with him who will not let mee ſpeed in what I ask; to whom hee replyed, I can want ſuch a friend as you, if for your ſake, I muſt do that which is not honeſt. The application is eaſy.

Well Young man, remember this, the torments of a thouſand hells were there ſo many, comes far ſhort of this one vice to bee turned out of Gods preſence with a (*Non novi vos*) I know you not.

Mat. 7.23

Ah! Young man, Young man, thou wer't better ten thouſand, thouſand times to bee caſt

caſt out of the thoughts and hearts of thy carnal friends, and relations, than to bee caſt out of Gods preſence with curſed *Cain* for ever, than to be excommunicated out of the general Aſſembly of the Saints, and Congregation of the firſt-born which are writen in heaven, and therefore away with this objection; but

Gen. 4

Heb. 12. 23.

Thirdly, The favour and friendſhip of ſuch carnal perſons, is very fickle and inconſtant, it is very fading and withering; Now they ſtroak, and anon they ſtrike, now they lift up, and anon they caſt down, now they ſmile, and anon they frown; now they kiſs, and anon they kill; now they cry *Hoſanna*, *Hoſana*, & anon they cry Crucify him, crucify him; *Haman* is one day feaſted with the King, and the next day made a feaſt for Crows; The Princes of *Babylon* were highly in King *Darius* his favour one day, and caſt into the Lyons den the next; The Scribes and Phariſees that

Eſth. 7.

Dan. 6

cryed up *Judas* one day, did in effect bid him go and hang himself the next day.

Mat. 27. 3, 4, 5

Such mens favour and friendship, are as *Venice* Glasses quickly broken, and therefore not much to bee prized or minded. Histories abounds with instances of this nature, but I must hasten, onely remember this, that every dayes experience tells us, that wicked men can soon turn Tables, and cross their books, their favour and friendship is usually like to a morning cloud, or like to *Jonahs* Gourd, one hour flourishing, and the next hour withering: and why then shouldest thou set thy heart upon that which is more changeable than the moon, &c. But

Valerian, Valens. Belisareus. Bajazet. Pythias. Dionysius. Pompey William the Conqueror, and many others have found it so.

Fourthly, and Lastly, who but a mad man would adventure the loss of the Kings favour to gain the favour of his Page? who but a stark *Bedlam* would run the hazard of loosing the Judges favour upon the Bench, to purchase

Glaucus who changed his Armour of Gold with Diomedes, for his Armour of Brass, stands upon record for a fool.

chaſe the good will of the Priſoner at the Barre?

Socrates preferred the Kings countenance before his Coyn; and ſo muſt you prefer the favour of God, the countenance of Chriſt, and the things of eternity, above all the favour and friendſhip of all the men in the World; when your neareſt friends and deareſt relations ſtands in competition, with Chriſt or the things above, you muſt ſhake them off, you muſt turn your backs upon them, and welcome Chriſt and the things of your Peace; hee that forſakes all relations for Chriſt, ſhall certainly finde all relations in Chriſt, hee will bee father, friend, husband, Child, hee will bee every thing to thee, who takeſt him for thy great all.

Pſal. 4.6,7

Pſal. 45.10
Mat. 10.37
Luk. 14.26,27

Object. 3. I but I ſhall meet with many reproaches from one and other, if I ſhould labour to bee good betimes; if I ſhould ſeek and ſerve the Lord in the ſpring and morning of my youth;

now to this I answer.

First, What are reproaches to the great things that others have suffered, for Christ, his Gospel, and the maintaining of a good conscience; what is a prick of a pin to a stab at the heart, what is a chiding to a hanging, a whipping to a burning; no more are all the reproaches thou canst meet with, to the great things that others have suffered for Christs sake.

Hebrews ch. 10. 11. read the ten persecutions.

Ah! Young men, you should be like the *Scythian* that went naked in the Snow, and when *Alexander* wondred how hee could endure it; Answered, I am not ashamed, for I am all forehead. So should you in the cause and way of Christ, you should not bee ashamed, you should be all forehead, you should bee stout and bold. *Colonus* the dutch Martyr under all his reproaches, called to the judge that had sentenced him to death, and desired him to lay his hand upon

upon his heart, and then asked him, whose heart did most beat, his or the Judges; All the reproaches in the world, should not so much as make a Christians heart beat, they should not, in the least, trouble him, nor disturb him; but

Secondly I Answer; That all the reproaches thou meetest with in the way of Christ, and for the sake of Christ, they do but adde Pearls to thy Crown, they are all additions to thy happiness and blessedness. If yee be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are yee; for the spirit of glory, and of God resteth upon you; on their part, hee is evil spoken of, but on your part hee is glorified; the more you are reproached for Christs sake on earth, the greater shall bee your reward in heaven; they that are most loaded with reproaches here, shall bee most laden with glory hereafter. Christ hath written their names in golden letters in his book

1 Pet. 4. 14

Mat. 5. 11, 12

book of life, that are written in black letters of reproach for his ſake on earth. Twas a good ſaying of one, a Reproacher (ſaith hee) is beneath a man, but the reproached that bear it well, are equal to Angells; of all Crowns the reproached mans Crown, will weigh heavieſt in heaven. But

Chryſoſtom.

Thirdly, I Anſwer, the beſt men have been moſtly reproached, *David* was, *Pſal.* 69. 7. *Pſal.* 89. 50. *Pſal.* 119. 22. *Pſal.* 31. 11. *Pſal.* 109. 25. and *Job* was. *Job* 19. 35. ch. 20. 3. *Job.* 16 10. and *Jeremiah* was, *Jer.* 20. 7. 10. Yea, this hath been the common portion of the people of God in all ages of the World; in *Nehemiahs* time it was ſo, *Neh.* 1. 3. *And they ſaid unto mee, the remnant that are left of the captivity, are in great affliction and reproach.* In *Davids* time it was ſo, *Pſal.* 79. 4. *and* *Pſal.* 44. 13, 14. And in *Jeremiahs* time it was ſo, *Lam.* 5. 1. *Remember, O Lord*

So was *Joſeph*, *Mephiboſheth*, *Naboth*, and in latter times. *Luther* whom they ſaid dyed deſpairing, when hee was alive to confute it. And that *Beza* run away with another mans wife. And that *Calvin* was branded on the ſhoulder for a Rogue, but there would be no end of this ſtuff, ſhould I ſay all that might be ſaid.

Lord, what is come upon us: Consider and behold our reproach, And in *Daniels* time it was ſo, *Dan.* 9. 16. *Thy people are become a reproach, to all that are about us*; and it was ſo in the Apoſtles time; *Rom.* 3. 8. And not rather as we be ſlanderouſly reported, as ſome affirm, that wee ſay, let us do evil, that good may come: whoſe damnation is juſt, 2 *Cor.* 6. 8. *By honour, and diſhonour, by evill report, and good report, as Deceivers, and yet true*: ſo in that 1 *Tim.* 4. 10. *for therefore wee both labour and ſuffer reproach, becauſe wee truſt in the living God, &c.* And it was ſo in the Primitive times, for when the Chriſtians met together before Sun to pray, the Heathens reported of them, that they worſhiped the Sun, and aſpired after Monarchy, and committed Adulteries, and unnatural uncleanneſſes; Now who is troubled, who complains of that which is a common lot, as Cold, Winter,

Tertullian.

Winter, Sickneſs, Death, &c. No more ſhould any complain of reproaches, it being the common lot of the people of God in all ages; yea, Chriſt himſelf was ſadly reproached, falſly accuſed, and ſtrangely traduced, diſgraced, and ſcandalized; hee was called a Glutton, a Drunkard, a friend of Publicans and Sinners, and judged to uſe the Black Art, caſting out Devils by *Belzebub*, the Prince of Devils; Chriſt hath ſuffered the greateſt, and the worſt reproaches, why then ſhould you be afraid to wear that Crown of Thorns that Chriſt hath wore before you? (there is a great truth in what hee ſaid (*Non poteſt qui pati timet, ejus eſſe qui paſſus eſt*) hee that is afraid to ſuffer, cannot bee his Diſciple, who ſuffered ſo much; if the Maſter hath been marked with a black coal, let not the ſervant think to go free. I am heartily angry (ſaith *Luther*) with thoſe that ſpeak of my ſufferings, which

Mat. 9. 34. ch. 12. 24

Tertul. de fuga in perſecut.

which if compared with that which Christ suffered for me, are not once to be mentioned in the same day; But

Fourthly, I Answer, that all reproachers shall at last be arraigned at the highest bar of justice, for all the reproaches that they have cast upon the people of God. They think it strange (or they think it a new world) that you run not with them to the same excrs of riot, speaking evil of you: who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead. I am in an extasy (saith *Picus Myrandula*) to think how prophane men rail upon those now, whom one day they will wish they had imitated. It was excellent Counsell that the Heathen Oratour gave his hearers. (*ita vivamus, ut rationem nobis reddendam arbitremur*) let us live as those that must give an account of all at last.

1 Pet. 4. 4 *Xenizontai Blasphemountes.* Wonder and Blaspheme.

Cic. 4. in Verr.

Chrysostome brings in Christ com-

comforting his Disciples against reproaches, speaking thus unto them; what, is the wrong grievous to you? that now they call you Seducers, and Conjurers, it will not be long before they shall openly call you the Saviours and blessings of the whole world, that time that shall declare all things that are now hid, shall rebuke them for their lying words against you, and shall kindle the splendor of your vertues; So they shall bee found Lyers, evil speakers, false accusers of others, but you shall bee more clear and illustrious than the Sun, and you shall have all men witnesses of your glory. Such as wisely and humbly bear reproaches now, shall judge reproachers at last. But

Mal. 3. 17
Mic. 7. 9, 10, 11
1 Cor. 6. 3, 4

Fifthly, I answer, that God doth many times even in this life, bear sad witness and testimony against the reproachers of his people, *I will bless them that bless thee, and I will curse them that*

Gen 12. 3
2 Sam. 16. 11, 12, 13

that curse thee.; God will even in this life curse them with a witness: who curse them that he blesseth; *Pharoah* found it so, and *Saul* found it so, and *Jezabel* found it so, and *Haman* found it so and the Princes of *Babylon* found it so, and the *Jews* find it so to this very day.

Divine Justice is like Vulcans iron net, that took the Gods; It apprehends and condemns all that are reproachers and enemies to his people

And Oh the dreadful judgements and curses that God hath poured out upon the reproachers of his name, of his Son, of his spirit, of his word, of his Ordinances, and of his people in these dayes wherein we live. I might give you many sad instances of such in our days, whose feet justice hath taken in the snare, men of abstracted conceits, and sublime speculations; and indeed such usually prove the great wise fools, who like the larke soareth higher and higher, peering and peering, till at length they fall into the net of the fowler, and no wonder, for such persons usually are as censorious,

as

as they are curious.

Sixthly, I Anſwer, *Paul* rejoyced more in his ſuffering reproaches for Chriſts ſake, than he did in his being wrapt up in the third heaven, 2 Cor. 12. 10. *Therefore I take pleaſure in infirmities, in reproaches, in neceſſities, in perſecutions, in diſtreſſes, for Chriſts ſake, for when I am weak, then am I ſtrong.* And therefore you have him often a ſinging this Song, I *Paul* a Priſoner of Jeſus Chriſt, not I *Paul* wrapt up in the third Heaven; Hee look't upon all his ſufferings, as Gods love tokens, he look't upon all reproaches, as pledges and badges of his Son-ſhip, and therefore joyes and glories under all. Chriſt ſhewed his love to him in wraping him up in the third heaven, and he ſhewed his love to Chriſt in his joyful bearing of reproaches for his ſake. *Paul* rattles his chain (which he bears for the Goſpel) and was proud of it, as a woman of her ornaments, ſaith

(*Crudelitas veſtra gloria noſtra*) your cruelty is our glory ſaid they in Tertullian. Fire, ſword, priſon, famine, are all delightful to me ſaith *Baſil.*

saith *Chrysostome*. Now why should that bee matter of trouble and discouragement to you, that was matter of joy and rejoycing to him? shall hee look upon reproaches as a Crown of honor, and will you look upon reproaches as a Crown of thorns? Oh Look upon reproach as a royal-Diadem, look upon it as Christs livery, and count it your highest ambition in this World, to wear this Livery for his sake, who once wore a Crown of Thorns for your sakes; When *Babylas* was to dye, hee required this favour, to have his chains buried with him as the ensigns of his honour. But

Sufferings are the ensigns of heavenly Nobility, saith *Calvin*.

Seventhly, I Answer, That by a wise and gracious behaviour under the reproaches thou meetest with for Christs sake, thou maiest be instrumentall to win others to Christ. It was a notable saying of *Luther*, (*Ecclesia totum mundum convertit sanguine et oratione*) the Church

It was an Observation of *Mr. John Lindsay*, that the very smoak of Mr. *Hamilton*, converted as many as it blew upon.

converted the whole world by bloud and prayer.

Divers have been won to Christ by beholding the gracious carriages of Christians under their sufferings, and reproaches for Christ.

Wee read of *Cicilia* a poor Virgin, who by her gracious behaviour under all her sufferings and reproaches for Christ, was the means of converting four hundred to Christ.

Adrianus beholding the gracious cheerful carriages of the Martyrs under all their sufferings and reproaches, was converted to Christ, and afterwards suffered Martyrdom for Christ.

Justin Martyr, was also converted by observing the holy and cheerful behaviour of the Saints, under all their sufferings and reproaches for Christ. During the cruel persecutions of the Heathen Emperours, the Christian faith was spread thorow all places of the Empire, because the

See also the Hist. of the Councill of Trent. p. 418. 2. Edit.

oftner

oftner they were mown down (ſaith *Tertullian*) the more they grew.

And *Auſtin* obſerved, that though there were many thouſands put to death for profeſſing Chriſt; yet they were never the fewer for being ſlain.

Ah! Young men, you may by a wiſe and gracious bearing of reproaches for Chriſt, be inſtrumental to win others to Chriſt; and therefore never plead there is a Lyon in the way, but I muſt haſten; and therefore in the eighth and

Laſt place, Conſider, How bravely ſeveral of the very Heathen have bore Reproaches and let that provoke you in the face of all Reproaches, to ſeek and ſerve the Lord in the morning of your youth, &c.

When *Demoſthenes* was Reproached by one, I will not ſaith hee ſtrive with thee in this kind of fight, in which he that is overcome is the better man.

When one came and Reproached *Xenophon*, ſayes hee, you have learned how to reproach, and I have learned how to bear Reproach.

And *Ariſtippus* (the Philoſopher) ſaid, you are fit to caſt Reproaches, and I am fit to bear Reproaches.

Demochares an Athenian Oratour, was ſent to King *Philip* as Embaſſadour, *Philip* asked him how hee might pleaſure the *Athenians*, for-ſooth ſaid he, if you will hang your ſelf; the Prince patiently ſent him home again, and bid him ask whether were more Noble, the patient hearer, or venter of ſuch unſeemly language.

When one wondered at the patience of *Socrates* towards one who reviled and reproached him; if we ſhould meet one ſaith hee, whoſe body were more unſound then ours, ſhould we be angry with him, and not rather pitty him? why then ſhould we

not

not do the like to him whose soul is more diseased than ours?

Augustus Cæsar, (in whose time Christ was born) bid *Catullus* the railing Poet to Supper, to shew that he had forgiven him.

It is a notable example that wee finde of one *Pericles*, who as he was sitting with others in a great meeting, a foul mouthed fellow, bitterly Reproached him, and railed all the day long upon him, and at night when it was dark, and the meeting up, the fellow followed him, and railed at him, even to his door, and he took no notice of him, but when he came at home, this is all he said, friend it is dark, I pray let my man light you home.

Plutarch in vita peric.

Josephus reports of that *Herod* that is made mention of in that *Act.* 12. 23. that when one *Simon* a Lawyer, had grievously Reproached and scandalized him before the people; he sent for

Themistocles professed that if two wayes were shewed him, one to hell, and the other to the bar, he would chuse that which went to hell, and forsake the other.

him, and cauſed him to ſit down next to him, and in a kind manner hee ſpake thus to him. Tell mee I pray thee, what thing thou feeſt fault worthy, or contrary to the Law in mee. *Simon* not having any thing to anſwer, beſought him to pardon him, which the King did, and was friends with him, and diſmiſſed him, beſtowing gifts on him. Ah young men, young men! ſhall the very Heathen make nothing of reproaches, ſhall they bear up ſo prudently and bravely under the greateſt loads of reproaches, and will not you? will not you? who in your light, in your mercies, and in all Goſpel engagements, are ſo highly advanced above them? Oh that none of them may bee called to the Bar in the great day, to witneſſe againſt any of you, into whoſe hands this Treatiſe ſhall fall; and ſo much by way of anſwer to the third Objection. But

Fourthly, The young man objects

jects and saies you presse us to bee good betimes, and to seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of our daies; but wee observe that most men minde not these things, but rather give liberty to themselves, to walk in waies that are most pleasing to the flesh; and why then should wee bee singular and nice, wee were better do as the most do, &c. Now to this I answer.

1 That though bad examples are dangerous to all, yet usually they prove most dangerous and pernicious to young persons, who are more easily drawn to follow examples, than precepts, especially those examples that tends most to undo them, 2 *King.* 15. 9. It is said of *Zacharia*, the King of *Israel*, *that hee did evil in the sight of the Lord, as his Fathers had done; hee departed not from the sins of* Jeroboam, hee would bee as his Father was, and do as his Father did, whatever

Præcepta docent, exempla movent, Precepts may instruct, but examples do perswade.

came on it. So the *Samaritans* of whom it is said, 2 *King.* 17. 41. *These Nations feared the* Lord, (that is, they made some kinde of profession of the true Religion, as the ten tribes had done) *and served their graven Images* (too) *both their Children, and their Childrens Children* (did thus) *as did their Fathers, so do they unto this day*: By evil examples they were both drawn to Idolatry, and rooted and confirmed in it; so the main reason why the Kingdome and Church of *Judah* were so setled in their Idolatry, that there was no hope of reclaiming them, was this, that their Children remembred their Altars, and their groves by the green trees upon the high hills, *Jer.* 17. 1, 2. Tinder is not apter to take fire, nor Wax the impression of the seal, nor Paper the ink, than youth is to follow ill examples. You may see in *Radbod*, King of *Phrisia*, who coming to the Font to bee baptised, asked, what was become

become of his Anceſtors; anſwer was made, that they dyed in a fearefull ſtate unbaptized, hee replyed, that hee would rather periſh with the multitude, than go to Heaven with a few.

I remember the Heathen brings in a young man, who hearing of the adulteries, and wickedneſſes of the gods, ſaid, what, do they ſo? and ſhall I ſtick at it? no, I will not. Sinful examples are very drawing, and very incouraging, many have found it ſo to their eternal undoing; thoſe that have no ears to hear what you ſay, have many eyes to ſee what you do. Bad Princes make bad Subjects, bad Maſters make bad Servants, bad Parents make bad Children, and bad Husbands make bad Wives; it is eaſier for the bad to corrupt the good, than for the good to convert the bad; it is eaſier to run down the hill with company, than to run up the hill alone.

I would deſire all young men often

Æthiopians lame themſelves, if their King bee lame, ſaith *Diodorus*. *Elian* reports that there was a Whore that did boaſt that ſhee could eaſily get ſcholers away from *Socrates*, but *Socrates* could get away no ſcholers from her.

often to remember that saying of *Lactantius* (*Qui malum imitatur, bonus esse non potest*) hee who imitates the bad, cannot bee good. Young men, in these professing times, stand between good and bad examples, as *Hercules* in his dream stood between vertue and vice. Solicited by both, chuse you must who to follow. Oh that you were all so wise as to follow the best; as a woman that hath many sutors is very carefull to take the best; so should you, life, Heaven, happinesse, eternity hangs upon it.

Sin is bad in the eye, worser in the tongue, worser in the heart, but worst of all in the life; and that because it then indangers other mens souls, as well as a mans own.

But before I come to the second answer, let mee leave this note or notion with those who make no conscience of undoing others by their examples, *viz.* That a more grievous punishment is reserved for them who cause others to offend, than for them which sin by their occasion, or example. Thus the Serpent was punished more than *Eve*, and *Eve* more than *Adam*,

So

So *Jezabel* felt a greater and sorer Judgement than *Ahab*. To sin (saith one) hath not so much perdition in it, as to cause others to sin. Friends, you have sins enough of your own to make you for ever miserable, why should you by giving bad examples to others, make your selves far more miserable? the lowest, the darkest, the hottest place in hell, will bee for them that have drawn others thither by their example. *Dives* knew, that if his Brethren were damn'd, hee should bee double damned, because hee had largely contributed to the bringing of them to hell by his wicked example; and therefore hee desires that they might bee kept out of hell (not out of any love, or good will to them) but because their coming thither would have made his hell more hot, his torments more insufferable; But

Mat. 23. 15

Luk. 16, 28.

Secondly, I answer, if you sin with others, you shall suffer with others, if you will partake of other

ther mens ſins, you ſhall alſo partake of other mens plagues They that have been (like *Simeon* and *Levi*) brethren in iniquity, they ſhall bee brethren in miſery; they that have ſinned together impenitently, ſhall bee ſent to hell jointly, they ſhall periſh together eternally. If you will needs bee companions with others in their ſins, you ſhall bee ſure to bee companions with them in their ſorrows. The old world ſin together, and are drowned together; the *Sodomites* burning in luſts together, were burnt with fire and brimſtone together, *Korah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, they ſin together, they murmure and provoke the Lord together, and the earth opens her mouth, and ſwallows them up together. *Pharaoh* and his hoſts purſue *Iſrael* together, and they are drowned in the Sea together. *Zimri* and *Cozbi* commit folly, uncleanneſs together, and *Phineas* ſtabs them both together. The Hebrew Doctors

Rev. 18. 4. *Non minus ardebit, qui cum multis ardebit. Auguſt.* Hee burns no leſſe, that burns with company.

Gen. 6.

Gen. 19.

Numb. 16. 26, -- 34.

Exod. 14.

Numb. 25.

Doctors have a very pretty parable to this purpose; A man planted an Orchard, and going from home, was careful to leave such watch-men as might both keep it from strangers, and not deceive him themselves; therefore hee appointed one blinde, but strong of his limbs, and the other seeing, but a cripple. These two in their Masters absence conspired together, and the blind took the lame on his shoulders, and so gathered the fruit, their Master returning and finding out their subtilty, punished them both together; so will Justice deal with you at last, who sin with others; therefore take heed young men of doing as others do. But

Thirdly, I answer, you must not live by examples, but by precepts; you are not to look so much at what others do, as at what God requires you to do, *Exod.* 23. 2. *Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil, neither shalt thou*

Obedientia non discussit Dei mandata, sed facit. Prosper.

thou ſpeak in a cauſe to decline after many to wreſt judgement, Rom. 12. 2. *faſhion not your ſelves like unto this world*; that is, do not faſhion and conform your ſelves to the corrupt cuſtomes and courſes of wretched worldlings, who have made gold their God, and gain their glory: the running croſſe to a divine command coſt the young Prophet his life, (though hee did it under pretence of Revelation from God) as you may ſee in that ſad ſtory, 1 *King.* 13. *ch. etc.* (*Non parentum, aut maiorum authoritas, ſed Dei docentis imperium*) the command of God muſt out-weigh all authority and example of men. And wee muſt bee as careful in the keeping of a light commandement, as an heavy commandement: ſaith a Rabby, Divine commands muſt bee obeyed againſt all contrary reaſonings, wranglings, and examples. *Auſtin* brings in ſome excuſing their complyance with the ſin-

Jerome.

full

ful customes and examples of those times in drinking healths, thus. Great personages urged it, and it was at the Kings banquet where they judged of loyalty by luxury, and put us upon this election; drink, or die, the not drinking of a health had been our death; hee gives this answer, that God who sees that for love to him, and his commands, thou wouldest not conform to their drunken customes, will give thee favour in their eyes, who thus threatneth thee to drink.

The complaint is antient in *Seneca*, that commonly men live not *ad rationem*, but *ad similitudinem*. *Seneca de vita beata. c. 1.*

Ah young men! you that dote so much upon examples now, will finde that a stinging, terrifying question, when put home by God, or conscience, who hath required these things at your hands? *Isa. 1, 12.* But

Fourthly, I answer, company and allurements to sin, will bee found no sufficient excuse for sin. If *Eve* lay her fault on the Serpent, and *Adam* lay his on *Eve*, God will take it off, and lay the curse

Gen. 3.

on

on both. *Sauls* provocation by the people (and by *Samuels* long ſtay) to offer Sacrifice would not bear him out, but for his diſobedience hee muſt loſe both his Crown, and life. The young man in the *Proverbs*, though tempted and ſolicited by the Harlot, yet hath a dart ſtruck thorough his heart; though *Jonah* did plead Gods gracious inclinations to ſhew mercy, and his fear of being diſproved, yea and though hee might have pleaded his fear of cruel and ſavage uſage from the *Ninevites*, (whoſe hearts were deſperately ſet upon wickedneſſe) And his deſpair of ever doing good upon a people ſo blinded, and hardened; and that they were *Gentiles*, and hee a *Jew*, and why ſhould hee then be ſent with ſo ſtrange, ſo terrible a meſſage, to ſuch a people, nothing being more hateful and diſtaſteful to a Jewiſh Palate? but all theſe pleas and excuſes will not bear off the blow; *Jonah* muſt into

1 Sam. 15. 14, 15, 26, 27.

Pro. 7. 14, 15, 21.

into the Sea for all this, yea hee muſt to the bottom of hell, as himſelf phraſes it; it is in vain for the bird to complaine, that it ſaw the corn, but not the pit-fall, or for a fiſh to plead, it ſaw the bait, but not the hook. So it will bee in vain for ſinners at laſt, when they are taken in an infernal pit-fall, to plead company and allurements by which they have been intiſed to undo their ſouls for ever.

Dionyſius the Sicilian King, to excuſe himſelf from the preſent delivery of the golden garment hee took from his God *Apollo*, anſwered, that ſuch a robe as that was, could not bee at any ſeaſon of the year uſeful to his god, for it would not keep him warm in the winter, and it was too heavy for the ſummer, and ſo put off his Idol god; but the God of ſpirits, the God of all fleſh, will not bee put off with any excuſes or pretences, when hee ſhall try and judge the children of men. But

Oculos quos peccatum claudis, pœna aperit. Gre. The eyes that ſin ſhuts, affliction opens, and *Jonah* found it ſo.

Mat. 18. 7.

Fifthly and laſtly, I anſwer, that it is a very great judgement to bee given up to follow evil examples: a man given up to evil examples, is a man ſadly left of God, wofully blinded by Satan, and deſperately hardened in ſin; it ſpeaks a man ripe for wrath, for ruine, for hell, *Jer.* 6.21. * *Behold, I will lay ſtumbling blocks before this people, and the Fathers and the Sons together ſhall fall upon them; the neighbour and his friend ſhall periſh.* Oh! it is a dreadful thing when God ſhall make the ſinful examples of others to bee ſtumbling blocks to a people, at which they ſhall ſtumble, and fall, and periſh for ever; good had it been for ſuch perſons, that they had never been born, as Chriſt once ſpake concerning *Judas.* The *Rhodians* and *Lydians* enacted ſeveral Laws, that thoſe ſons which followed not their Fathers in their vertues, but followed vicious examples, ſhould bee diſ-inherited,

* This particle Behold is ſometimes a note of deriſion, Gen. 3.22. 2 A Note of Attention often, Iſa. 28. 6. Mal. 1. 1. Luk. 1. 20. 3 A Note of Admiration often. 4 A Note of Aſſeveration. 5 A Note of Caſtigation, in all theſe ſenſes we may take it here.

Varro.

rited, and their lands given to the most vertuous of that race, not admitting any impious heir whatsoever to inherit; and do you think that God will not disinherit all those of Heaven, and happinesse, who follow vicious examples! doubtlesse hee will, 1 *Cor.* 10. 5, -- 12.

The fifth and last Objection (I shall mention) is this, *God is a God of mercy, in him are bowels of mercy; yea a Sea, an Ocean of mercy; hee loves mercy, hee delights in mercy, and hee is ready to shew mercy to poor sinners, when they are even at the last cast, when there is but a short stride between them and the grave, between them and eternity*; as wee see in his extending mercy to the Theef, and in his giving a pardon into his hand, and the assurance of Paradise into his bosome, when hee was ready to be turned off the Ladder of life; and therefore I may spend the Prim-rose of my daies in following sin, and the delights,

profits, vanities, and contents of this world, and at laſt caſt, I may have mercy as well as the Theef. God is a God made up of mercy, and ſurely hee will not deny ſome crums of mercy to a poor ſinner in miſery, &c.

Now to this Objection I ſhall give theſe following anſwers.

God is as well all hand to puniſh, as hee is all grace to pardon.

Firſt, God is as juſt as hee is merciful, witneſſe his caſting the Angels out of Heaven, and *Adam* out of Paradiſe, witneſſe all the threatnings, the curſes, the woes, that the Bible is filled with, from one end, to the other; witneſſe the hell, the horrour, the terrour and amazement that hee raiſes in the conſciences of ſinners; witneſſe the devaſtations that hee hath made of the moſt ſtately flouriſhing Towns, Cities, Countries and Kingdomes, that have been in all the world; witneſſe the variety of diſeaſes, calamities, miſeries, dangers, deaths, and hells, that alwaies attends the inhabitants of the world; but above all

all witness Christs treading the Wine-press of his fathers wrath; witness his hiding his face from him, and the pouring out of all his displeasure, and vengeance upon him.

Zaleucus the *Locrensian* Lawgiver, thrust out one of his own sons eyes, for his transgressing of a wholesome Law, which hee had enacted, but God the father thrust out both Christs eys for our transgressing of his royal Law; Oh! the justice & severity of God. But

Valerius lib. 6. cap. 5

Secondly, I Answer, that there is not a greater evidence of blindness, prophaneness, hardheartedness, spiritual madness, and hellish desperateness in all the World, than to make that an Argument, an incouragement, to sin (viz. the mercy of God) which should be the greatest Argument under heaven, to keep a man from Sin, as all know that have but read the scripture; neither are there any Sinners in the World, that God delights to

Read Isa. 22. 12,13,14,15 and Ezek. 24. 11,12,13,14

rain Hell out of Heaven upon, as upon such, who by their abuse of mercy, turns the God of mercy, into a God of clouds, and goes on out-daring justice it self, *Deut.* 29. 19,20. *And it come to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have Peace (God is a God of mercy) though I walk in the imagination of my heart, to adde drunkenness to thirst*: The Lord will not spare him, but then the Anger of the Lord, and his jealousy, shall smoak against that man, and all the Curses that are written in this book shall lye upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven. In these words you may observe, that God is absolute in threatning, to shew that he will bee resolute in punishing, Psal. 11.5,6. *The wicked, and him that loveth iniquity; doth his soul hate. Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest, this shall be the portion of their cup.* Ah!

A lover of Iniquity is a liver in Iniquity upon choice.

Ah ! That all poor ſinners would make theſe two Scriptures their companions, their conſtant bed-fellows, till they are got above that ſad temptation of turning the mercy of God into an incouragement to ſin.

Whilſt *Milo Crotoniates* was tearing a ſunder the ſtock of an Oake, his ſtrength failing him, the cliſt ſuddenly cloſing, was held ſo faſt by the hands, that he became a prey to the beaſts of the field; All the abuſers of mercy will certainly, and ſuddenly, become a prey to the juſtice of God, that will rent and tear them in peices as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, Pſal. 50. 22. *Wo, wo, to that ſoul that fights againſt God with his own mercies*, that will bee bad, becauſe hee is good; that will be ſinful, becauſe he is merciful; that will turn all the kindneſſes of God (that ſhould bee as ſo many ſilver cords, to tye him to love and obedience) into arrows, and ſo ſhoot them back into the

heart of God. Abuſed mercy will at laſt turn into a Lyon, a fierce Lyon; and then wo to the abuſers and deſpiſers of it. But

Thirdly, In Anſwer, to that part of the Objection, concerning the Thief on the Croſs, I offer theſe things briefly to your thoughts.

Exemplum latronis ſervati eſt admirandum, non imitandum

Firſt, That as one was ſaved to teach Sinners, not to deſpair, ſo another was damned to teach them not to preſume. A pardon is ſometimes given to one upon the Gallows, but who ſo truſts to that, the rope may be his hire, it is not good(ſaith one) to put it upon the Pſalm of *miſerere*, and the neck verſe; for ſometimes hee proves no Clerk, and ſo hangs for it.

Secondly, It is an example without a promiſe, here is an example of late repentance, but where is there a promiſe of late repentance.

Oh! Let not his late and ſudden converſion, be to thee a tempta-

temptation, till thou hast found a promise for late and sudden conversion; it is not examples, but promises that are foundations for faith to rest on; he that walks by an example of mercy, without a precept to guide him, and a promise to support him, walks but by a dark Lanthorn, that will deceive him: well young man remember this, examples of mercy increase wrath, when the heart is not bettered by them; But

Thirdly, This was a rare miracle of mercy, with the glory wherof Christ did honour the ignominy of his Cross, and therfore wee may as well look for another crucifying of Christ, as look for a sinners conversion, when he hath scarce time enough to reckon up, all those particular duties, which make up the integrity of its constitution. But

Fourthly, I Answer, This Theif knew not Christ before, he had not refused, neglected, nor slighted

ſlighted Chriſt before; the Sermon on the Croſs was the firſt Sermon that ever he heard Chriſt preach, and Chriſts prayer on the Croſs, was the firſt prayer that ever he heard Chriſt make; he knew not Chriſt till hee met him on the Croſs (which proved to him a happy meeting) his caſe was as if a Turk, or Heathen, ſhould now be converted to the faith, and therefore thou haſt little reaſon; O young man, to plead this example to keep Chriſt, and thy ſoul aſunder, who art every day under the call, the intreaties and wooings of Chriſt. But

Fifthly, and Laſtly, I Anſwer, The circumſtances of time, and place, are rightly to be conſidered; Now when Chriſt was triumphing on the Croſs over ſin, ſatan, and the world, when he had made the devils a publik ſpectacle of ſcorn and deriſion, when hee was taking his leave of the world, and entering into his glory; Now hee puts a pardon into the Theifs hand,

hand, and crouds other favours and kindneſſes upon him.

As in the *Roman* Triumphs, the Victor being aſcended up to the Capitol in a Chariot of ſtate, uſed to caſt certain peeces of coyn among the people for them to pick up, which hee uſed not to do at other times; So out Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in the day of his Triumph, and ſolemn inauguration into his heavenly kingdome, ſcatters ſome heavenly jewels that this Theif might pick up; which he doth not, nor will not do every day; Or as in theſe days it is uſual with Princes to ſave ſome notorious malefactors at their coronation, when they enter upon their kingdomes in Triumph, which they do not uſe to do afterwards; So did Jeſus Chriſt carry it toward this Thief; but this is not his ordinary way of ſaving and bringing ſouls to glory, and therefore do not O young man, let not the Thiefs late converſion, prove

a temptation, or an occaſion of thy delaying thy repentance, and trifling away the primeroſe of thy dayes in vanity and folly; And thus much may ſuffice to have ſpoken, by way of Anſwer, to the Young mans Objections. I ſhall now ſpeak a few words to Old men, and ſo cloſe up. Now

Is it ſo commendable, ſo deſirable, and ſo neceſſary for young men to be good betimes, to ſeek and ſerve the Lord in the ſpring and morning of their Youth, as hath been ſufficiently demonſtrated in this Treatiſe? Oh then that I could ſo wooe aged perſons as to win them (who yet have put off this great work) to ſeek and ſerve the Lord, before their glaſs be out, their Sun ſet, and their ſouls loſt for ever.

Oh that that counſil of the Prophet might take hold upon your hearts. *Give glory to the Lord your God, before hee cauſe darkneſſe, and before your feet ſtumble*

Jer. 13. 16

ſtumble (thorow age) upon the dark mountains, and while yee look for light, he turn it into the ſhadow of death, and make it groſs darkneſs.

I but aged Sinners may reply, is there any hope, any help for us? is there any probability, is there any poſſibility? that ever ſuch as we are ſhould return and finde mercy and favour with the Lord? wee who have lived ſo long without him, we that have ſinned ſo much againſt him, we that to this day are ſtrangers to him, yea in arms againſt him; Is there any hope that we white-headed ſinners, who have withſtood ſo many thouſand offers of grace, and ſo many thouſand motions of the ſpirit, and ſo many thouſand checks of conſcience, and ſo many thouſand tenders of Chriſt, and heaven, that ever we ſhould obtain mercy, that ever we ſhould have our old hearts turned, our millions of Sin pardoned, our vile

natures changed, and poor ſouls ſaved, &c.

I Anſwer, that there is hope even for ſuch as you are; all the Angels in heaven, and all the men on earth, cannot tell, but that you, even you, may obtain mercy and favour, that your ſouls dye not; with the Lord nothing is impoſſible, and for the grace of the Goſpel, nothing is too hard; now this I ſhall make evident by an induction of partilars, thus

Mat. 20. 1---17 The Roman penny was ſeven pence half penny.

Firſt, All were not called nor ſent to work in the Vineyard, at the firſt-hour; ſome were called at the third-hour; others, at the ſixth; others, at the ninth; and ſome at the eleventh. God hath his ſeveral times of calling ſouls to himſelf: the eleventh hour was about five in the afternoon, an hour before Sun-ſet, when it was even time to leave work: and yet at this hour ſome were called, imployed, and rewarded, with the reſt.

Some

Some of the fathers by the several hours mentioned in this Parable, do understand the several ages of man, *viz.* Childhood, youth, middle-age, and Old-age, wherein poor souls are called and converted to Christ, the scope of the Parable, is to signify the free-grace of God in the calling of some in the spring and morning of their days, and in the calling of others in their Old-age, in the evening of their days. But

Secondly, *Abraham* in the Old Testament, and *Nicodemus* in the New, were called and converted in their old age; when there were but a few steps between them and the grace, between them and eternity; therefore let not the gray-headed sinner despair, though his spring be past, his summer over past, and he arrived at the fall of the leaf. But

Gen. 12.4
Joh. 3.1,2,3,4.
ch. 7.50.

Thirdly, Divine promises shall be made good to returning souls, to repenting souls, to beleeving

Isa.1.18
Jer.3.12.
Isa.43.22,23,
24,25
Isa.57.17,18
Jer.5.1.5
John 3.16
Mar.16.16.

leeving souls, be they young or old, 2 Chron. 30.9. *The Lord your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if you return unto him,* Joel 2.13. *And rent your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil,* Isa. 55.7. *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for hee will abundantly pardon:* or hee will multiply to pardon. More of this you may see by reading the Scriptures in the margent; all sorts of sin shall bee pardoned, to all sorts of beleeving and repenting sinners.

The new *Jerusalem* hath twelve Gates, to shew that there is every way access for all sorts and ranks of Sinners to come to Christ. He was born in an Inn,

to shew that hee receives all comers, young and Old, poor, and rich, &c. But

Fourthly, The Lord hath declared by Oath, a greater delight in the conversion and salvation of poor sinners (whether they are young or old) than in the destruction and damnation of such, *Ezek. 33. 11. As I live saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live*: Turn ye, turn ye, from your evil wayes; for why will ye dye, O ye house of Israell; two things make a thing more credible.

1) The quality or dignity of the person speaking.

2) The manner of the speech; Now here you have the great God, not onely speaking, promising, but solemnly swearing, that hee had rather poor sinners should live than dye, bee happy, than miserable; therefore despair not, Oh aged sinner, but

Isa.1.18
Jer.3.12.
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return unto the Lord, and thou ſhalt bee happy for ever. But

Vna guttula plus valet, quam cœlum & terra. Luther. One little drop is more worth than Heaven and earth.

Fifthly, there is vertue enough in the precious blood of Jeſus Chriſt to waſh and cleanſe away all ſin; not only to cleanſe away the young mans ſins, but alſo to cleanſe away the old mans ſins; not only to cleanſe a ſinner of twenty years old, but to cleanſe a ſinner of fifty, ſixty, yea a hundred years old, 1 *Joh.* 1. 7. *The blood of Jeſus Chriſt his Son cleanſeth us from all ſin*; not ſimply from ſin, but from all ſin; there is ſuch a power and efficacie in the blood of Chriſt, as is ſufficient to cleanſe all ſorts of ſinners, from all ſorts of ſins; there is vertue in the blood of the Lamb to waſh out all the ſpots that are in the oldeſt ſinners heart; and therefore let not old ſinners deſpair, let not them ſay, there is no hope, there is no help, as long as this fountain the blood of Jeſus Chriſt is open, for all ſorts of ſinners to waſh in. But Sixthly,

Sixthly, The call and invitations of Christ in the Gospel, are general, and indefinite, excluding no sort of sinners, *Rev.* 3. 20 *Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man* (mark the indefiniteneſſe of personal admittance) *hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and hee with mee*; let the sinner bee old or young, a green head, or a gray head, if hee will but open the door, Christ will come in, and have communion and fellowship with him. So in that, *Mat.* 11. 28. *Isa.* 55. 1. *John* 7. 37. *Rev.* 22. 17. turn to these Scriptures, and dwell upon them, they all clearly evidence the call and gracious invitations of Christ to bee to all sinners, to every sinner, hee excepts not a man, no, though never so old, nothing shall hinder the sinner, any sinner, the worst and most aged sinner, from obtaining mercy, if hee bee willing to open to Christ, and to receive him as

his Lord and King. *John* 6. 37. But

Seventhly, Christs pathetical lamentation over all sorts and ranks of sinners, declares his willingnesse to shew mercy to them, *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem* (saith Christ, weeping over it) *that thou hadst known in this thy day the things that belong to thy peace, &c. O that my people had hearkened unto mee!* Christ weeps over *Jerusalem*; so did *Titus*, and so did *Marcellus* over *Syracuse*, and so did *Scipio* over *Carthage*; but they shed tears for them, whose blood they were to shed; but Christ weeps over the necks of those young and old sinners, who were to shed his blood. As a tender hearted Father weeps over his rebellious Children, when neither smiles, nor frowns, neither counsels, nor intreaties will win them, or turn them from their evil waies. So doth Jesus Christ over these rebellious Jews upon whom nothing would work. But Eighthly,

Luk. 19. 41, 42.

Psal. 81. 13.

Eighthly and lastly, though aged sinners have given Christ many thousand denyals, yet he hath not taken them, but after all, and in the face of all denyals, hee still re-inforces his suit, and continues to beseech them by his Spirit, by his word, by his wounds, by his blood, by his messengers, and by his rebukes, to turn home to him, to embrace him, to beleeve in him, and to match with him, that they may bee saved eternally by him; all which bespeaks gray-headed sinners, not to despair, nor to dispute, but to repent, return, and beleeve that it may go well with them for ever. Consider seriously what hath been spoken, and the Lord make you wise for eternity.

Psal. 65. 1,2. Rom. 10. 21. 1 Joh. 5. 2, 3.

FINIS.

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